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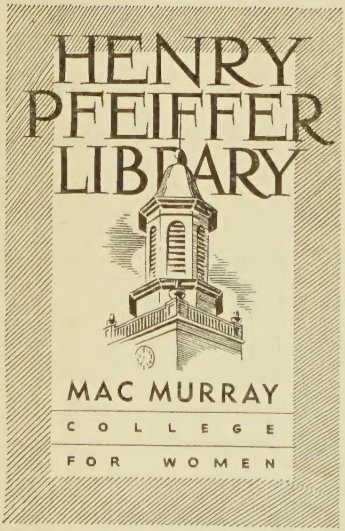

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THE WORKS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

EDITED BY

CHARLES CURTIS BIGELOW

AND

TEMPLE SCOTT

VOLUME VIII

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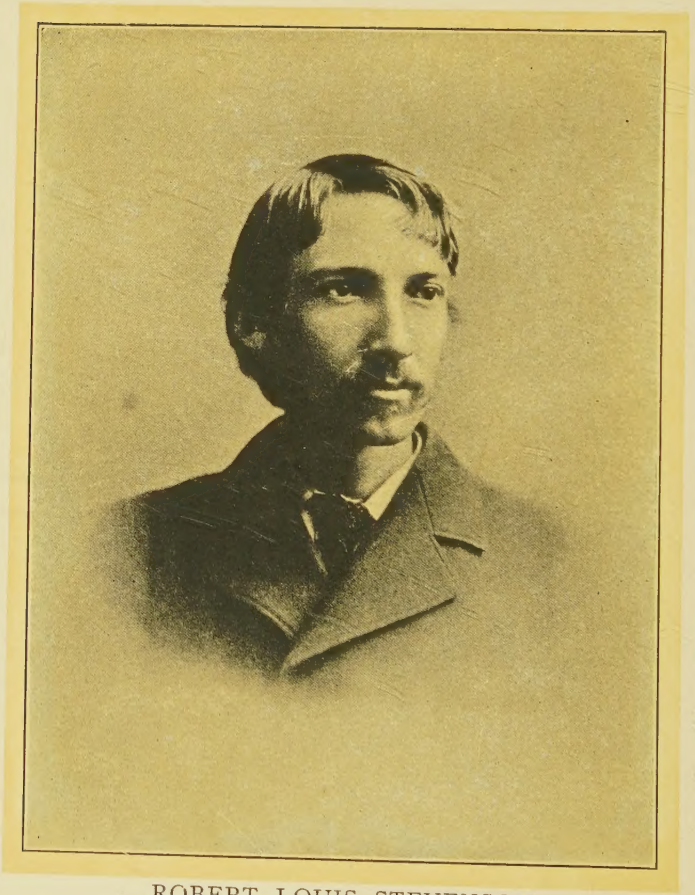

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
From a photograph in the possession of Edmund Gosse.

Edition de Luxe

Poems, Ballads and Plays

By

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Vol. VIII

The
Frederick J. Quinby Company
Boston

Henry Pfeiffer Library
MacMurray College
Jacksonville, Illinois

EDITION DE LUXE

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STEVENSON AS A POET

UNDERWOODS

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

ETC.

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STEVENSON AS A POET

BY

EDMUND GOSSE

STEVENSON AS A POET

BY

EDMUND GOSSE

A PRETTY little anthology might be made of poems by distinguished writers who never for a moment professed to be poets, and who only "swept, with hurried hand, the strings" when they thought nobody was listening. The elegant technical people of the eighteenth century who never liked to be too abstruse to seem polite, would contribute a great many of these flowers that were born to bloom unseen. It is not everybody who is aware that the majestic Sir William Blackstone was "guilty," as people put it, of a set of one hundred octosyllabic verses which do credit to any laurelled master on Parnassus. We might, indeed, open our little volume with *The Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse*. Then, of course, there would be Bishop Berkeley's unique poem, "Westward the Course of Empire takes its way"; and Aldys, the antiquary, would spare us his "Busy, curious, thirsty fly." We should appeal to Burton for the prefatory verses in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and to Bacon for "The World's a Bubble." If we had any finger in that anthology, Smollet's "Ode to Levan Water" should by no means be omitted. It would be a false pride that would reject Holcroft's "Gaffer Gray" or Sydney Smith's "Receipt for a Salad," which latter Herrick might have been glad to sign. Hume's solitary poem should be printed by itself, or with some of Carlyle's lyrics, in an appendix, as an awful warning. As we come down to recent times the task of editing our anthology would grow difficult. In our day the prose writers have either been coy or copious with their verses. If Professor Tyndall has never essayed the Lydian measure it is very surprising, but we

have not yet been admitted to hear his shell; nor has Mr. Walter Besant, to the best of our belief, published an ode to anything. Let the shades of Berkeley and Smollet administer reproof. Twenty years ago we should have been contented to close our selection with "The bed was made, the room was fit," from *Travels with a Donkey*. But, later in life Stevenson published books of poems.

To one who followed closely the early works of the essayist and novelist whom a better man than I am has called "the most exquisite and original of our day," his poetry was not a surprise, for the ivory shoulder of the lyre peeped out now and then. Where the careful reader perceived that Stevenson was likely to become openly a poet was in snatches of verse published here and there in periodicals, and of a quality too good to be neglected. Nevertheless the publication of *A Child's Garden of Verses* was something of a surprise to many, and perhaps the book of grown-up poems *Underwoods* surprised a still greater number of readers. There was no doubt about it any longer, Stevenson was a candidate for the bays.

The *Child's Garden of Verses* has now been published long enough to enable us to make a calm consideration of its merits. When it was fresh, opinion was divided, as it always is about a new strong thing, between those who in Longfellow's phrase about the little girl, think it very, very good, and those who think it is horrid. After reading *Underwoods*, we go back to *A Child's Garden* with a clearer sense of the writer's intention, and a wider experience of his poetical outlook upon life. The latter book helps us to comprehend the former; there is the same sincerity, the same buoyant simplicity, the same curiously candid and confidential attitude of mind. If anyone doubted that Stevenson was putting his own childish memories into verse in the first book, all doubt must cease in reading the second book, where the experiences, although those of an adult, have exactly the same convincing air of candour. The first thing which strikes the reader of *A Child's Garden* is the extraordinary clearness and precision with which the immature fancies of eager childhood

are reproduced in it. People whose own childish memories have become very vague, and whose recollections of their games and dreams are hazy in the extreme, ask themselves how far this poet's visions were inspired by real memory and how far by invention. *Underwoods* sets that question at rest; the same hand that gave us—

> My bed is like a little boat;
> Nurse helps me in when I embark;
> She girds me in my sailor's coat,
> And starts me in the dark;

and the even more delicious—

> Now, with my little gun, I crawl
> All in the dark along the wall,
> And follow round the forest-track
> Away behind the sofa-back,—

also gives us pictures like the following:—

> *My house,* I say. But hark to the sunny doves,
> That make my roof the arena of their loves,
> That gyre about the gable all day long
> And fill the chimneys with their murmurous song:
> *Our house,* they say; and *mine,* the cat declares,
> And spreads his golden fleece upon the chairs;
> And *mine* the dog, and rises stiff with wrath
> If any alien foot profane the path.
> So, too, the buck that trimmed my terraces,
> Our whilome gardener, called the garden his;
> Who now, deposed, surveys my plain abode
> And his late kingdom, only from the road.

We now perceive that it is not invention, but memory of an extraordinarily vivid kind, patiently directed to little things, and charged with imagination; and we turn back with increased interest to *A Child's Garden,* assured that it gives us a unique thing, a transcript of that child-mind which we have all possessed and enjoyed, but of which no one, except Stevenson, seems to have carried away a photograph. Long ago, in one of the very earliest, if I remember right, of those essays by R. L. S. for which we used so eagerly

to watch the *Cornhill Magazine* in Leslie Stephen's time, in the paper called "Child's Play," * this retention of what is wiped off from the memories of the rest of us was clearly displayed. Out of this rarely suggestive essay I will quote a few lines which might have been printed as an introduction to *A Child's Garden*:—

"In the child's world of dim sensation, play is all in all. 'Making believe' is the gist of his whole life, and he cannot so much as take a walk, except in character. I could not learn my alphabet without some suitable *mise-en-scène*, and had to act a business man in an office before I could sit down to my book. . . . I remember, as though it were yesterday, the expansion of spirit, the dignity and self-reliance that came with a pair of mustachios in burnt cork, even when there was none to see. Children are even content to forego what we call the realities, and prefer the shadow to the substance. When they might be speaking intelligently together, they chatter gibberish by the hour, and are quite happy because they are making believe to speak French."

Probably all will admit the truth of this statement of infant fancy, when it is presented to them in this way. But how many of us, in perfect sincerity, not relying upon legends of the nursery, not refreshed by the study of our own children's "make-believe," can say that we clearly recollect the method of it? We shall find that our memories are like a breath upon the glass, like the shape of a broken wave. Nothing is so hopelessly lost, so utterly volatile, as the fancies of our childhood. But Stevenson alone amongst us all, appears to have kept daguerreotypes of the whole series of his childish sensations. Except Mrs. Ewing he seems to be without a rival in this branch of memory as applied to literature.

The various attitudes of literary persons to the child are very interesting. There are, for instance, poets, like Victor Hugo and Swinburne, who come to admire, who stay to

* *The Cornhill Magazine*, vol. xxxviii., September, 1878. Reprinted in Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers, in volume vi of the present edition.

adore, and who do not disdain to throw their purple over any humble article of nursery use. They are so magnificent in their address to infancy, they say so many brilliant and unexpected things, that the mother is almost as much dazzled as she is gratified. We stand round, with our hats off, and admire the poet as much as he admires the child; but we experience no regret when he presently turns away to a discussion of grown-up things. We have an ill-defined notion that he reconnoitres infancy from the outside and has not taken the pains to reach the secret mind of childhood. It is to be noted, and this is a suspicious circumstance, that Swinburne and Victor Hugo like the child better the younger it is.

> What likeness may define, and stray not
> From truth's exactest way,
> A baby's beauty? Love can say not,
> What likeness may.

This is charming; but the address is to the mother, is to the grown-up reflective person. To the real student of child-life the baby contains possibilities, but is at present an uninteresting chrysalis. It cannot carry a gun through the forest, behind the sofa-back; it is hardly so useful as a cushion to represent a passenger in a railway-train of inverted chairs. Still more remote than the dithyrambic poets are those writers about children—and they are legion—who have ever the eye fixed upon morality, and carry the didactic tongue thrust in the cheek of fable. Charles Kingsley, who might have made so perfect a book of his *Water Babies*, sins notoriously in this respect. The moment a wise child perceives the presence of allegory, or moral instruction, all the charm of a book is gone. Parable is the very antipodes of childish "make-believe," into which the element of ulterior motive or secondary moral meaning never enters for an instant. The secret of the charm of Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature*, which were the fairest food given to very young minds in my day, was that the fortunate child never discovered that they were parables at all. I for one, used to read and re-read them as realistic state-

ments of fact, the necessity of pointing a moral merely having driven the amiable author to the making of her story a little more fantastic, and therefore more welcome, than it would otherwise be. It was explained to me one hapless day that the parables were of a nature to instill nice principles into the mind; and from that moment Mrs. Gatty became a broken idol. Lewis Carroll owed his great and deserved success to his suppleness in bending his fancy to the conditions of a mind that is dreaming. It has never seemed to me that the *Adventures in Wonderland* were specially childish; dreams are much the same, whether a child or a man is passive under them, and it is a fact that Lewis Carroll appeals just as keenly to adults as to children. In Edward Lear's rhymes and ballads the love of grotesque nonsense in the grown-up child is mainly appealed to; and these are certainly appreciated more by parents than by children. It would be easy, by multiplying examples, to drive home my contention that only two out of the very numerous authors who have written successfully on or for children have shown a clear recollection of the mind of healthy childhood itself. Many authors have achieved brilliant success in describing children, in verbally caressing them, in amusing, in instructing them; but only two—Mrs. Ewing in prose, and Stevenson in verse—have sat down with them without disturbing their fancies, and have looked into the world of "make-believe" with the children's own eyes. If Victor Hugo should visit the nursery, every head of hair ought to be brushed, every pinafore be clean, and nurse must certainly be present, as well as mamma. But Mrs. Ewing or Stevenson might lead a long romp in the attic when nurse was out shopping, and not a child in the house should know that a grown-up person had been there.

In publishing his second volume of verse Stevenson ventured on a bolder experiment. In many respects it is plainly the work of the same fancy that described the Country of Counterpane and the Land of Story-books, but it is a little sadder, and a great deal older. There is the same delicate sincerity, the came candour and simplicity, the same artless

dependence on the good faith of the public. The ordinary theme of the poets are untouched; there is not one piece which deals with the passion of love. The book is occupied with friendship, with nature, with the honourable instincts of man's moral machinery. Above all, it enters with great minuteness, and in a very confidential spirit, into the theories and moods of the writer himself. It is to many readers a revelation of the every-day life of an author whose impersonal writings have given them so much and so varied pleasure. Not a dozen ordinary interviewers could have extracted so much of the character of the man himself as he gives us in these pages.

The question of admitting the personal element into literature is one which is not very clearly understood. People try to make rules about it, and say that an author may describe his study, but not his dining-room, and his wife, but not her cousin. The fact is that no rules can possibly be laid down in a matter which is one of individual sympathy. The discussion whether a writer may speak of himself or no is utterly vain until we are informed in what voice he has the habit of speaking. It is all a question which depends on the *timbre* of the literary voice. As in life there are persons whose sweetness of utterance is such that we love to have them warbling at our side, no matter on what subject they speak, and others to whom we have scarcely patience to listen if they want to tell us that we have inherited a fortune, so it is in literature. Except that little class of stoic critics who like to take their books *in vacuo*, most of us prefer to know something about the authors we read. But whether we like them to tell it to us themselves, or no, depends entirely on the voice. Thackeray and Fielding are never confidential enough to satisfy us; Dickens and Smollet set our teeth on edge directly they start upon a career of confidential expansion; and this has nothing to do with any preference for *Tom Jones* over *Peregrine Pickle*. There is no doubt that Stevenson is one of those writers the sound of whose personal voice is pleasing to the public, and there must be hundreds of his admirers who have missed not a word of "To a

Gardener" or "The Mirror Speaks," and who have puzzled out each of the intimate addresses to his private friends with complete satisfaction.

Stevenson does not as a rule show to advantage in blank verse. It is not that his verses are ever lame or faulty, for in the technical portion of the art he seldom fails, but that his rhymeless iambics remind the ear too much now of Tennyson, now of Keats. He is, on the contrary, exceedingly happy and very much himself in that metre of eight or seven syllables, with couplet-rhymes, which served so well the first poets who broke away from heroic verse, such as Swift and Lady Winchilsea, Green and Dyer. If he must be affiliated to any school of poets it is to these, who hold the first outworks between the old classical camp and the invading army of romance, to whom I should ally him. Martial is with those octosyllabists of Queen Anne, and to Martial might well have been assigned, had they been in old Latin, the delicately homely lines, "To a Gardener." How felicitous is this quatrain about the onion—

> Let first the onion flourish there,
> Rose among roots, the maiden fair,
> Wine-scented and poetic soul
> Of the capicious salad-bowl.

Or this, in more irregular measure, and enfolding a loftier fancy—

> Sing clearlier, Muse, or evermore be still,
> Sing truer, or no longer sing!
> No more the voice of melancholy Jacques
> To make a weeping echo in the hill;
> But as the boy, the pirate of the spring,
> From the green elm a living linnet takes
> One natural verse recapture—then be still.

Stevenson's verses are so full of character, so redolent of his own fascinating temperament, that it is not too bold to suppose that so long as his prose is appreciated those who love that will turn to this. There have been prose writers whose verse has not lacked accomplishment or merit, but has been so far from interpreting their prose that it rather

disturbed its effect and weakened its influence. Cowley is an example of this, whose ingenious and dryly intellectual poetry positively terrifies the reader away from his eminently suave and human essays. None of Stevenson's poetry will thus disturb his prose. Opinions may be divided as to their positive value, but no one will doubt that the same characteristics are displayed in the poems, the same suspicion of "the abhorred pedantic sanhedrim," the same fulness of life and tenderness of hope, the same bright felicity of epithet as in the essays and romances. The belief, however, may be expressed without fear of contradiction that Stevenson's fame will rest mainly upon his verse and not upon his prose, only in that dim future when Matthew Arnold's prophecy shall be fulfilled and Shelley's letters shall be preferred to his lyrical poems. It is saying a great deal to acknowledge that the author of *Kidnapped* is scarcely less readable in verse than he is in prose.

UNDERWOODS

DEDICATION

There are men and classes of men that stand above the common herd: the soldier, the sailor, and the shepherd not infrequently; the artist rarely; rarelier still, the clergyman; the physician almost as a rule. He is the flower (such as it is) of our civilization; and when that stage of man is done with, and only remembered to be marveled at in history, he will be thought to have shared as little as any in the defects of the period, and most notably exhibited in the virtues of the race. Generosity he has, such as is possible to those who practice an art, never to those who drive a trade; discretion, tested by a hundred secrets; tact, tried in a thousand embarrassments; and what are more important, Heraclean cheerfulness and courage. So it is that he brings air and cheer into the sickroom, and often enough, though not so often as he wishes, brings healing.

Gratitude is but a lame sentiment; thanks, when they are expressed, are often more embarrassing than welcome; and yet I must set forth mine to a few out of many doctors who have brought me comfort and help: to Dr. Willey of San Francisco, whose kindness to a stranger it must be as grateful to him as it is touching to me, to remember; to Dr. Karl Ruedi of Davos, the good genius of the English in his frosty mountains; to Dr. Herbert of Paris, whom I knew only for a week, and to Dr. Caissot of Montpellier, whom I knew only for ten days, and who have yet written their names deeply in my memory; to Dr. Brandt of Royat; to Dr. Wakefield of Nice; to Dr. Chepmell, whose visits make it a pleasure to be ill; to Dr. Horace Dobell, so wise in counsel; to Sir Andrew Clark, so unwearied in kindness; and to that wise youth, my uncle, Dr. Balfour.

I forget as many as I remember; and I ask both to pardon me, these for silence, those for inadequate speech. But one name I have kept on purpose to the last, because it is a household word with me, and because if I had not received favors from so many hands and in so many quarters of the world, it should have stood upon this page alone: that of my friend Thomas Bodley Scott of Bournemouth. Will he accept this,

although shared among so many, for a dedication to himself? and when next my ill-fortune (which has thus its pleasant side) brings him hurrying to me when he would fain sit down to meat or lie down to rest, will he care to remember that he takes this trouble for one who is not fool enough to be ungrateful?

R. L. S.

SKERRYVORE,
BOURNEMOUTH

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The human conscience has fled of late the troublesome domain of conduct for what I should have supposed to be the less congenial field of art: there she may now be said to rage, and with special severity in all that touches dialect; so that in every novel the letters of the alphabet are tortured, and the reader wearied, to commemorate shades of mispronunciation. Now, spelling is an art of great difficulty in my eyes, and I am inclined to lean upon the printer, even in common practice, rather than to venture abroad upon new quests. And the Scots tongue has an orthography of its own, lacking neither "authority nor author." Yet the temptation is great to lend a little guidance to the bewildered Englishman. Some simple phonetic artifice might defend your verses from barbarous mishandling, and yet not injure any vested interest. So it seems at first; but there are rocks ahead. Thus, if I wish the diphthong *ou* to have its proper value, I may write *oor* instead of *our;* many have done so and lived, and the pillars of the universe remained unshaken. But if I did so, and came presently to *doun,* which is the classical Scots spelling of the English *down,* I should begin to feel uneasy; and if I went on a little further, and came to a classical Scots word, like *stour* or *dour* or *clour,* I should know precisely where I was—that is to say, that I was out of sight of land on those high seas of spelling reform in which so many strong swimmers have toiled vainly. To some the situation is exhilarating; as for me, I give one bubbling cry and sink. The compromise at which I have arrived is indefensible, and I have no thought of trying to defend it. As I have stuck for the most part to the proper spelling, I append a table of some common vowel sounds which no one need consult; and just to prove that I belong to my age and have in me the stuff of a reformer, I have

used modification marks throughout. Thus I can tell myself, not without pride, that I have added a fresh stumbling block for English readers, and to a page of print in my native tongue have lent a new uncouthness. *Sed non nobis.*

I note again, that among our new dialecticians, the local habitat of every dialect is given to the square mile. I could not emulate this nicety if I desired; for I simply wrote my Scots as well as I was able, not caring if it hailed from Lauderdale or Angus, from the Mearns of Galloway; if I had ever heard a good word, I used it without shame; and when Scots was lacking, or the rhyme jibbed, I was glad (like my betters) to fall back on English. For all that, I own to a friendly feeling for the tongue of Fergusson and of Sir Walter, both Edinburgh men; and I confess that Burns has always sounded in my ear like something partly foreign. And indeed I am from the Lothians myself; it is there I heard the language spoken about my childhood; and it is in the drawling Lothian voice that I repeat it to myself. Let the precisians call my speech that of the Lothians. And if it be not pure, alas! what matters it? The day draws near when this illustrious and malleable tongue shall be quite forgotten; and Burns's Ayrshire, and Dr. Macdonald's Aberdeen-awa', and Scott's brave, metropolitan utterance will be all equally the ghosts of speech. Till then I would love to have my hour as a native Maker, and be read by my own countryfolk in our own dying language: an ambition surely rather of the heart than of the head, so restricted as it is in prospect of endurance, so parochial in bounds of space.

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UNDERWOODS

BOOK I—IN ENGLISH

I

ENVOY

Go, little book, and wish to all
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A bin of wine, a spice of wit,
A house with lawns inclosing it,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore!

II

A SONG OF THE ROAD

The gauger walked with willing foot,
And aye the gauger played the flute;
And what should Master Gauger play
But *Over the hills and far away?*

Whene'er I buckle on my pack
And foot it gayly in the track,
O pleasant gauger, long since dead,
I hear you fluting on ahead.

You go with me the self-same way—
The self-same air for me you play;
For I do think and so do you
It is the tune to travel to.

For who would gravely set his face
To go to this or t'other place?
There's nothing under heav'n so blue
That's fairly worth the traveling to.

On every hand the roads begin,
And people walk with zeal therein;
But wheresoe'er the highways tend,
Be sure there's nothing at the end.

Then follow you, wherever hie
The traveling mountains of the sky.
Or let the streams in civil mode
Direct your choice upon a road;

For one and all, or high or low,
Will lead you where you wish to go;
And one and all go night and day
Over the hills and far away!

Forest of Montargis, 1878.

III

THE CANOE SPEAKS

On the great streams the ships may go
About men's business to and fro.
But I, the egg-shell pinnace, sleep
On crystal waters ankle-deep:
I, whose diminutive design,
Of sweeter cedar, pithier pine,
Is fashioned on so frail a mold,
A hand may launch, a hand withhold:
I, rather, with the leaping trout
Wind, among lilies, in and out;
I, the unnamed, inviolate,
Green, rustic rivers navigate;

My dipping paddle scarcely shakes
The berry in the bramble-brakes;
Still forth on my green way I wend
Beside the cottage garden-end;
And by the nested angler fare,
And take the lovers unaware.
By willow wood and water-wheel
Speedily fleets my touching keel;
By all retired and shady spots
Where prosper dim forget-me-nots;
By meadows where at afternoon
The growing maidens troop in June
To loose their girdles on the grass.
Ah! speedier than before the glass
The backward toilet goes; and swift
As swallows quiver, robe and shift
And the rough country stockings lie
Around each young divinity.
When, following the recondite brook,
Sudden upon this scene I look,
And light with unfamiliar face
On chaste Diana's bathing-place,
Loud ring the hills about and all
The shallows are abandoned. . . .

IV

It is the season now to go
About the country high and low,
Among the lilacs hand in hand,
And two by two in fairy land.

The brooding boy, the sighing maid,
Wholly fain and half afraid,
Now meet along the hazel'd brook
To pass and linger, pause and look.

A year ago, and blithely paired,
Their rough-and-tumble play they shared;
They kissed and quarreled, laughed and cried,
A year ago at Eastertide.

With bursting heart, with fiery face,
She strove against him in the race;
He, unabashed, her garter saw,
That now would touch her skirts with awe.

Now by the stile ablaze she stops,
And his demurer eyes he drops;
Now they exchange averted sighs
Or stand and marry silent eyes.

And he to her a hero is,
And sweeter she than primroses;
Their common silence dearer far
Than nightingale and mavis are.

Now when they sever wedded hands,
Joy trembles in their bosom-strands,
And lovely laughter leaps and falls
Upon their lips in madrigals.

V

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

A naked house, a naked moor,
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit,
And poplars at the garden foot:
Such is the place that I live in,
Bleak without and bare within.

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again,
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendor; here
The army of the stars appear.
The neighbor hollows dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter time
Silver the simple grass with rime;
Autumnal frosts enchant the pool
And make the cart-ruts beautiful;
And when snow-bright the moor expands
How shall your children clap their hands!
To make this earth our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page.
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

VI

A VISIT FROM THE SEA

Far from the loud sea beaches
  Where he goes fishing and crying,
Here in the inland garden
  Why is the sea-gull flying?

Here are no fish to dive for;
  Here is the corn and lea;
Here are the green trees rustling.
  Hie away home to sea!

Fresh is the river water
  And quiet among the rushes;
This is no home for the sea-gull
  But for the rooks and thrushes.

Pity the bird that has wandered!
  Pity the sailor ashore!
Hurry him home to the ocean,
  Let him come here no more.

High on the sea-cliff ledges
  The white gulls are trooping and crying
Here among rooks and roses,
  Why is the sea-gull flying?

VII

TO A GARDENER

Friend, in my mountain side demesne,
My plain-beholding, rosy, green
And linnet-haunted garden-ground,
Let still the esculents abound.
Let first the onion flourish there,
Rose among roots, the maiden-fair,
Wine-scented and poetic soul
Of the capacious salad bowl.
Let thyme the mountaineer (to dress
The tinier birds) and wading cress,
The lover of the shallow brook,
From all my plots and borders look.

Nor crisp and ruddy radish, nor
Pease-cods for the child's pinafore
Be lacking; nor of salad clan
The last and least that ever ran
About great nature's garden-beds.
Nor thence be missed the speary heads
Of artichoke; nor thence the bean
That gathered innocent and green
Outsavors the belauded pea.

These tend, I prithee; and for me,
Thy most long-suffering master, bring
In April, when the linnets sing
And the days lengthen more and more
At sundown to the garden door.
And I, being provided thus,
Shall, with superb asparagus,
A book, a taper, and a cup
Of country wine, divinely sup.

La Solitude, Hyères.

VIII

TO MINNIE

(With a Hand-Glass)

A PICTURE-FRAME for you to fill,
A paltry setting for your face,
A thing that has no worth until
You lend it something of your grace,

I send (unhappy I that sing
Laid by a while upon the shelf)
Because I would not send a thing
Less charming than you are yourself.

And happier than I, alas!
(Dumb thing, I envy its delight),
'Twill wish you well, the looking-glass,
And look you in the face to-night.

1869.

IX

TO K. de M.

A LOVER of the moorland bare
And honest country winds, you were;
The silver-skimming rain you took;
And loved the floodings of the brook,
Dew, frost and mountains, fire and seas,
Tumultuary silences,
Winds that in darkness fifed a tune,
And the high-riding virgin moon.

And as the berry, pale and sharp,
Springs on some ditch's counterscarp
In our ungenial, native north—
You put your frosted wildings forth,
And on the heath, afar from man,
A strong and bitter virgin ran.

The berry ripened keeps the rude
And racy flavor of the wood;
And you that loved the empty plain
All redolent of wind and rain,
Around you still the curlew sings—
The freshness of the weather clings—
The maiden jewels of the rain
Sit in your dabbled locks again.

X

TO N. V. de G. S.

The unfathomable sea, and time, and tears,
The deeds of heroes and the crimes of kings
Dispart us; and the river of events
Has, for an age of years, to east and west
More widely borne our cradles. Thou to me
Art foreign, as when seamen at the dawn
Descry a land far off and know not which.
So I approach uncertain; so I cruise
Round thy mysterious islet, and behold
Surf and great mountains and loud river-bars,
And from the shore hear inland voices call.
Strange is the seaman's heart; he hopes, he fears;
Draws closer and sweeps wider from that coast;
Last, his rent sail refits, and to the deep
His shattered prow uncomforted puts back.
Yet as he goes he ponders at the helm
Of that bright island; where he feared to touch,
His spirit re-adventures; and for years,
Where by his wife he slumbers safe at home,
Thoughts of that land revisit him; he sees
The eternal mountains beckon, and awakes
Yearning for that far home that might have been.

XI

TO WILL H. LOW

Youth now flees on feathered foot
Faint and fainter sounds the flute,
Rarer songs of gods; and still
Somewhere on the sunny hill,

Or along the winding stream,
Through the willows, flits a dream;
Flits, but shows a smiling face,
Flees, but with so quaint a grace,
None can choose to stay at home,
All must follow, all must roam.
This is unborn beauty: she
Now in air floats high and free,
Takes the sun and breaks the blue;—
Late with stooping pinion flew
Raking hedgerow trees, and wet
Her wing in silver streams, and set
Shining foot on temple roof:
Now again she flies aloof,
Coasting mountain clouds and kiss't
By the evening's amethyst.

In wet wood and miry lane,
Still we pant and pound in vain;
Still with leaden foot we chase
Waning pinion, fainting face;
Still with gray hair we stumble on,
Till, behold, the vision gone!
Where hath fleeting beauty led?
To the doorway of the dead.
Life is over, life was gay:
We have come the primrose way.

XII

TO MRS. WILL H. LOW

Even in the bluest noonday of July,
There could not run the smallest breath of wind
But all the quarter sounded like a wood;
And in the checkered silence and above
The hum of city cabs that sought the Bois,

Suburban ashes shivered into song.
A patter and a chatter and a chirp
And a long-dying hiss—it was as though
Starched old brocaded dames through all the house
Had trailed a strident skirt, or the whole sky
Even in a wink had over-brimmed in rain.
Hark, in these shady parlors, how it talks
Of the near autumn, how the smitten ash
Trembles and augurs floods! O not too long
In these inconstant latitudes delay,
O not too late from the unbeloved north
Trim your escape! For soon shall this low roof
Resound indeed with rain, soon shall your eyes
Search the foul garden, search the darkened rooms,
Nor find one jewel but the blazing log.

12 *Rue Vernier, Paris.*

XIII

TO H. F. BROWN

(Written During a Dangerous Sickness)

I sit and wait a pair of oars
On cis-Elysian river-shores.
Where the immortal dead have sate,
'Tis mine to sit and meditate;
To re-ascend life's rivulet,
Without remorse, without regret;
And sing my *Alma Genetrix*
Among the willows of the Styx.

And lo, as my serener soul
Did these unhappy shores patrol,
And wait with an attentive ear
The coming of the gondolier,

Your fire-surviving roll I took,
Your spirited and happy book;*
Whereon, despite my frowning fate,
It did my soul so recreate
That all my fancies fled away
On a Venetian holiday.

Now, thanks to your triumphant care,
Your pages clear as April air,
The sails, the bells, the birds, I know,
And the far-off Friulan snow;
The land and sea, the sun and shade,
And the blue even lamp-inlaid,
For this, for these, for all, O friend,
For your whole book from end to end—
For Paron Piero's muttonham—
I your defaulting debtor am.

Perchance, reviving, yet may I
To your sea-paven city hie,
And in a *felze*, some day yet
Light at your pipe my cigarette.

XIV

TO ANDREW LANG

Dear Andrew, with the brindled hair,
Who glory to have thrown in air
High over arm, the trembling reed,
By Ale and Kail, by Till and Tweed;
An equal craft of hand you show
The pen to guide, the fly to throw;
I count you happy starred; for God,
When He with inkpot and with rod

* "Life on the Lagoons," by H. F. Brown, originally burned in the fire at Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.'s.

Endowed you, bade your fortune lead
Forever by the crooks of Tweed,
Forever by the woods of song
And lands that to the Muse belong;
Or if in peopled streets, or in
The abhorred pedantic sanhedrim,
It should be yours to wander, still
Airs of the morn, airs of the hill,
The plovery Forest and the seas
That break about the Hebrides,
Should follow over field and plain
And find you at the window-pane;
And you again see hill and peel,
And the bright springs gush at your heel.
So went the fiat forth, and so
Garrulous like a brook you go,
With sound of happy mirth and sheen
Of daylight—whether by the green
You fare that moment, or the gray;
Whether you dwell in March or May;
Or whether treat of reels and rods
Or of the old unhappy gods:
Still like a brook your page has shone,
And your ink sings of Helicon.

XV

ET TU IN ARCADIA VIXISTI

(TO R. A. M. S.)

In ancient tales, O friend, thy spirit dwelt;
There, from of old, thy childhood passed; and there
High expectation, high delights and deeds,
Thy fluttering heart with hope and terror moved.
And thou hast heard of yore the Blatant Beast,
And Roland's horn, and that war-scattering shout

Of all-unarmed Achilles, ægis-crowned.
And perilous lands thou sawest, sounding shores
And seas and forests drear, island and dale
And mountain dark. For thou with Tristram rod'st
Or Bedevere, in farthest Lyonesse
Thou hadst a booth in Samarcand, whereat
Side-looking Magians trafficked; thence, by night,
An Afreet snatched thee, and with wings upbore
Beyond the Aral mount; or hoping gain,
Thou, with a jar of money didst embark
For Balsorah, by sea. But chiefly thou
In that clear air took'st life; in Arcady
The haunted, land of song; and by the wells
Where most the gods frequent. There Chiron old,
In the Pelethronian antre, taught thee lore:
The plants, he taught, and by the shining stars
In forests dim to steer. There hast thou seen
Immortal Pan dance secret in a glade,
And, dancing, roll his eyes; these where they fell,
Shed glee, and through the congregated oaks
A flying horror winged; while all the earth
To the god's pregnant footing thrilled within.
Or whiles, beside the sobbing stream, he breathed,
In his clutched pipe unformed and wizard strains
Divine yet brutal; which the forest heard,
And thou, with awe; and far upon the plain
The unthinking plowman started and gave ear.
Now things there are that, upon him who sees,
A strong vocation lay; and strains there are
That whoso hears shall hear for evermore.
For evermore thou hear'st a mortal Pan
And those melodious godheads, ever young
And ever quiring on the mountains old.

What was this earth, child of the gods, to thee?
Forth from thy dreamland thou, a dreamer cam'st
And in thine ears the olden music rang,
And in thy mind the doings of the dead,

And those heroic ages long forgot.
To a so fallen earth, alas! too late,
Alas! in evil days, thy steps return,
To list at noon for nightingales, to grow
A dweller on the beach till Argo come
That came long since, a lingerer by the pool
Where that desired angel bathes no more.

As when the Indian to Dakota comes
Or farthest Idaho, and where he dwelt,
He with his clan, a humming city finds;
Thereon a while, amazed, he stares, and then
To right and leftward, like a questing dog,
Seeks first the ancestral altars, then the hearth
Long cold with rains, and where old terror lodged,
And where the dead. So thee undying Hope,
With all her pack, hunts screaming through the years:
Here, there, thou fleest; but nor here nor there
The pleasant gods abide, the glory dwells.

That, that was not Apollo, not the god.
This was not Venus, though she Venus seemed
A moment. And though fair yon river move,
She, all the way from disenchanted fount
To seas unhallowed runs; the gods forsook
Long since her trembling rushes; from her plains
Disconsolate, long since adventure fled;
And now although the inviting river flows
And every poplared cape and every bend
Or willowy islet, win upon thy soul
And to thy hopeful shallop whisper speed;
Yet hope not thou at all; hope is no more;
And O, long since the golden groves are dead
The faery cities vanished from the land!

XVI

TO W. E. HENLEY

The year runs through her phases; rain and sun,
Springtime and summer pass; winter succeeds;
But one pale season rules the house of death.
Cold falls the imprisoned daylight; fell disease
By each lean pallet squats, and pain and sleep
Toss gaping on the pillows.

But O thou!
Uprise and take thy pipe. Bid music flow,
Strains by good thoughts attended, like the spring
The swallows follow over land and sea.
Pain sleeps at once; at once, with open eyes,
Dozing despair awakes. The shepherd sees
His flock come bleating home; the seaman hears
Once more the cordage rattle. Airs of home!
Youth, love and roses blossom; the gaunt ward
Dislimns and disappears, and, opening out,
Shows brooks and forests, and the blue beyond
Of mountains.

Small the pipe; but oh! do thou,
Peak-faced and suffering piper, blow therein
The dirge of heroes dead; and to these sick,
These dying, sound the triumph over death.
Behold! each greatly breathes; each tastes a joy
Unknown before, in dying; for each knows
A hero dies with him—though unfulfilled,
Yet conquering truly—and not dies in vain.

So is pain cheered, death comforted; the house
Of sorrow smiles to listen. Once again—
O thou, Orpheus and Heracles, the bard
And the deliverer, touch the stops again!

XVII

HENRY JAMES

WHO comes to-night? We ope the doors in vain.
Who comes? My bursting walls, can you contain
The presences that now together throng
Your narrow entry, as with flowers and song,
As with the air of life, the breath of talk?
Lo, how these fair immaculate women walk
Behind their jocund maker; and we see
Slighted *De Mauves*, and that far different she,
Gressie, the trivial sphynx; and to our feast
Daisy and *Barb* and *Chancellor* (she not least!)
With all their silken, all their airy kin,
Do like unbidden angels enter in.
But he, attended by these shining names,
Comes (best of all) himself—our welcome James.

XVIII

THE MIRROR SPEAKS

WHERE the bells peal far at sea
Cunning fingers fashioned me.
There on palace walls I hung
While that Consuelo sung;
But I heard, though I listened well,
Never a note, never a trill,
Never a beat of the chiming bell.
There I hung and looked, and there
In my gray face, faces fair
Shone from under shining hair.
Well I saw the poising head,
But the lips moved and nothing said;
And when lights were in the hall,
Silent moved the dancers all.

So a while I glowed, and then
Fell on dusty days and men;
Long I slumbered packed in straw,
Long I none but dealers saw;
Till before my silent eye
One that sees came passing by.

Now with an outlandish grace,
To the sparkling fire I face
In the blue room at Skerryvore;
Where I wait until the door
Open, and the Prince of Men,
Henry James, shall come again.

XIX

KATHARINE

We see you as we see a face
That trembles in a forest place
Upon the mirror of a pool
Forever quiet, clear and cool;
And in the wayward glass appears
To hover between smiles and tears
Elfin and human, airy and true,
And backed by the reflected blue.

XX

TO F. J. S.

I read, dear friend, in your dear face
Your life's tale told with perfect grace;
The river of your life I trace
Up the sun-checkered, devious bed
To the far-distant fountain-head.

Not one quick beat of your warm heart,
Nor thought that came to you apart,
Pleasure nor pity, love nor pain
Nor sorrow, has gone by in vain;
But as some lone, wood-wandering child
Brings home with him at evening mild
The thorns and flowers of all the wild,
From your whole life, O fair and true,
Your flowers and thorns you bring with you!

XXI

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

XXII

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:—

Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

XXIII

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

Out of the sun, out of the blast,
Out of the world, alone I passed
Across the moor and through the wood
To where the monastery stood.
There neither lute nor breathing fife,
Nor rumor of the world of life,
Nor confidences low and dear,
Shall strike the meditative ear.
Aloof, unhelpful, and unkind,
The prisoners of the iron mind,
Where nothing speaks except the hell
The unfraternal brothers dwell.

Poor, passionate men, still clothed afresh
With agonizing folds of flesh;
Whom the clear eyes solicit still
To some bold output of the will,
While fairy Fancy far before
And musing Memory-Hold-the-door
Now to heroic death invite
And now uncurtain fresh delight:
O, little boots it thus to dwell
On the remote unneighbored hill!

O, to be up and doing, O
Unfearing and unshamed to go

In all the uproar and the press
About my human business!
My undissuaded heart I hear
Whisper courage in my ear.
With voiceless calls, the ancient earth
Summons me to a daily birth.
Thou, O my love, ye, O my friends—
The gist of life, the end of ends—
To laugh, to love, to live, to die,
Ye call me by the ear and eye!

Forth from the casemate, on the plain
Where honor has the world to gain,
Pour forth and bravely do your part,
O knights of the unshielded heart!
Forth and forever forward!—out
From prudent turret and redoubt,
And in the mellay charge amain,
To fall, but yet to rise again!
Captive? ah, still, to honor bright,
A captive soldier of the right!
Or free and fighting, good with ill?
Unconquering but unconquered still!

And ye, O brethren, what if God,
When from heav'n's top he spies abroad,
And sees on this tormented stage
The noble war of mankind rage:
What if his vivifying eye,
O monks, should pass your corner by?
For still the Lord is Lord of might;
In deeds, in deeds, he takes delight;
The plow, the spear, the laden barks,
The field, the founded city, marks;
He marks the smiler of the streets,
The singer upon garden seats;
He sees the climber in the rocks:
To him the shepherd folds his flocks.

For those he loves that underprop
With daily virtues heaven's top,
And bear the falling sky with ease,
Unfrowning caryatides.

Those he approves that ply the trade,
That rock the child, that wed the maid,
That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
And still with laughter, song and shout,
Spin the great wheel of earth about.

But ye?—O ye who linger still,
Here in your fortress on the hill,
With placid face, with tranquil breath,
The unsought volunteers of death,
Our cheerful General on high
With careless looks may pass you by.

XXIV

Not yet, my soul, these friendly fields desert,
Where thou with grass, and rivers, and the breeze,
And the bright face of day, thy dalliance hadst;
Where to thine ear first sang the enraptured birds;
Where love and thou lasting bargain made.
The ship rides trimmed, and from the eternal shore
Thou hearest airy voices; but not yet
Depart, my soul, not yet a while depart.

Freedom is far, rest far. Thou art with life
Too closely woven, nerve with nerve entwined;
Service still craving service, love for love,
Love for dear love, still suppliant with tears.
Alas, not yet thy human task is done!
A bond at birth is forged; a debt doth lie
Immortal on mortality. It grows—

By vast rebound it grows, unceasing growth;
Gift upon gift, alms upon alms, upreared,
From man, from God, from nature, till the soul
At that so huge indulgence stands amazed.

Leave not, my soul, the unfoughten field, nor leave
Thy debts dishonored, nor thy place desert
Without due service rendered. For thy life,
Up, spirit, and defend that fort of clay,
Thy body, now beleaguered; whether soon
Or late she fall; whether to-day thy friends
Bewail thee dead, or, after years, a man
Grown old in honor and the friend of peace.
Contend, my soul, for moments and for hours;
Each is with service pregnant; each reclaimed
Is as a kingdom conquered, where to reign.
As when a captain rallies to the fight
His scattered legions, and beats ruin back,
He, on the field, encamps, well pleased in mind.
Yet surely him shall fortune overtake,
Him smite in turn, headlong his ensigns drive;
And that dear land, now safe, to-morrow fall.
But he, unthinking, in the present good
Solely delights, and all the camps rejoice.

XXV

It is not yours, O mother, to complain,
Not, mother, yours to weep,
Though nevermore your son again
Shall to your bosom creep,
Though nevermore again you watch
your baby sleep.

Though in the greener paths of earth,
Mother and child no more
We wander; and no more the birth

Of me whom once you bore
Seems still the brave reward that
once it seemed of yore;

Though as all passes, day and night,
The seasons and the years,
From you, O mother, this delight,
This also disappears—
Some profit yet survives of all your
pangs and tears.

The child, the seed, the grain of corn,
The acorn on the hill,
Each for some separate end is born
In season fit, and still
Each must in strength arise to work
the almighty will.

So from the hearth the children flee,
By that almighty hand
Austerely led; so one by sea
Goes forth, and one by land;
Nor aught of all man's sons escape from
that command.

So from the sally each obeys
The unseen almighty nod;
So till the ending all their ways
Blindfolded loth have trod:
Nor knew their task at all, but were the
tools of God.

And as the fervent smith of yore
Beat out the glowing blade,
Nor wielded in the front of war
The weapons that he made,
But in the tower at home still plied his
ringing trade;

So like a sword the son shall roam
On nobler missions sent;
And as the smith remained at home
In peaceful turret pent,
So sits the while at home the mother
well content.

XXVI

THE SICK CHILD

Child

O MOTHER, lay your hand on my brow!
O mother, mother, where am I now?
Why is the room so gaunt and great?
Why am I lying awake so late?

Mother

Fear not at all: the night is still;
Nothing is here that means you ill—
Nothing but lamps the whole town through,
And never a child awake but you.

Child

Mother, mother, speak low in my ear,
Some of the things are so great and near,
Some are so small and far away,
I have a fear that I cannot say.
What have I done, and what do I fear,
And why are you crying, mother dear?

Mother

Out in the city, sounds begin,
Thank the kind God, the carts come in!
An hour or two more, and God is so kind,
The day shall be blue in the window-blind,
Then shall my child go sweetly asleep,
And dream of the birds and the hills of sheep.

XXVII

IN MEMORIAM F. A. S.

Yet, O stricken heart, remember, O remember
How of human days he lived the better part.
April came to bloom and never dim December
Breathed its killing chills upon the head or heart.

Doomed to know not Winter, only Spring, a being
Trod the flowery April blithely for a while,
Took his fill of music, joy of thought and seeing,
Came and stayed and went, nor ever ceased to smile.

Came and stayed and went, and now when all is finished,
You alone have crossed the melancholy stream,
Yours the pang, but his, O his, the undiminished
Undecaying gladness, undeparted dream.

All that life contains of torture, toil, and treason,
Shame, dishonor, death, to him were but a name.
Here, a boy, he dwelt through all the singing season
And ere the day of sorrow departed as he came.

Davos, 1881.

XXVIII

TO MY FATHER

Peace and her huge invasion to these shores
Puts daily home; innumerable sails
Dawn on the far horizon and draw near;
Innumerable loves, uncounted hopes
To our wild coasts, not darkling now, approach:

Not now obscure, since thou and thine are there,
And bright on the lone isle, the foundered reef,
The long, resounding foreland, Pharos stands.

These are thy works, O father, these thy crown;
Whether on high the air be pure, they shine
Along the yellowing sunset, and all night
Among the unnumbered stars of God they shine;
Or whether fogs arise and far and wide
The low sea-level drown—each finds a tongue
And all night long the tolling bell resounds:
So shine, so toll, till night be overpast,
Till the stars vanish, till the sun return,
And in the haven rides the fleet secure.

In the first hour, the seaman in his skiff
Moves through the unmoving bay, to where the town
Its earliest smoke into the air upbreathes
And the rough hazels climb along the beach.
To the tugg'd oar the distant echo speaks.
The ship lies resting, where by reef and roost
Thou and thy lights have led her like a child.

This hast thou done, and I—can I be base?
I must arise, O father, and to port
Some lost, complaining seaman pilot home.

XXIX

IN THE STATES

With half a heart I wander here
As from an age gone by
A brother—yet though young in years,
An elder brother, I.

You speak another tongue than mine,
  Though both were English born.
I toward the night of time decline,
  You mount into the morn.

Youth shall grow great and strong and free,
  But age must still decay:
To-morrow for the States—for me,
  England and Yesterday.

San Francisco.

XXX

A PORTRAIT

I AM a kind of farthing dip,
  Unfriendly to the nose and eyes;
A blue-behinded ape, I skip
  Upon the trees of Paradise.

At mankind's feast, I take my place
  In solemn, sanctimonious state,
And have the air of saying grace
  While I defile the dinner-plate.

I am "the smiler with the knife,"
  The battener upon garbage, I—
Dear Heaven, with such a rancid life,
  Were it not better far to die?

Yet still, about the human pale,
  I love to scamper, love to race,
To swing by my irreverent tail
  All over the most holy place;

And when at length, some golden day,
The unfailing sportsman, aiming at,
Shall bag, me—all the world shall say,
Thank God, and there's an end of that!

XXXI

Sing clearlier, Muse, or evermore be still,
Sing truer or no longer sing!
No more the voice of melancholy Jacques
To wake a weeping echo in the hill;
But as the boy, the pirate of the spring,
From the green elm a living linnet takes,
One natural verse recapture—then be still.

XXXII

A CAMP *

The bed was made, the room was fit
By punctual eve the stars were lit;
The air was still, the water ran,
No need was there for maid or man,
When we put up, my ass and I,
At God's green caravanserai.

XXXIII

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS †

We traveled in the print of olden wars,
Yet all the land was green
And love we found, and peace,
Where fire and war had been.

* From "Travels with a Donkey." † Ibid.

They pass and smile, the children of the sword—
No more the sword they wield;
And O, how deep the corn
Along the battlefield!

XXXIV

SKERRYVORE

For love of lovely words and for the sake
Of those, my kinsmen and my countrymen,
Who early and late in the windy ocean toiled
To plant a star for seamen, where was then
The surfy haunt of seals and cormorants:
I, on the lintel of this cot, inscribe
The name of a strong tower.

XXXV

SKERRYVORE: *The Parallel*

Here all is sunny, and when the truant gull
Skims the green level of the lawn, his wing
Dispetals roses; here the house is framed
Of kneaded brick and the plumed mountain pine,
Such clay as artists fashion and such wood
As the tree-climbing urchin breaks. But there
Eternal granite hewn from the living isle
And dowelled with brute iron, rears a tower
That from its wet foundation to its crown
Of glittering glass, stands, in the sweep of winds,
Immovable, immortal, eminent.

XXXVI

My house, I say. But hark to the sunny doves
That make my roof the arena of their loves,
That gyre about the gable all day long
And fill the chimneys with their murmurous song:
Our house, they say; and *mine*, the cat declares
And spreads his golden fleece upon the chairs;
And *mine*, the dog, and rises stiff with wrath
If any alien foot profane the path.
So too the buck that trimmed my terraces,
Our whilome gardener, called the garden his;
Who now, deposed, surveys my plain abode
And his late kingdom, only from the road.

XXXVII

My body which my dungeon is,
And yet my parks and palaces:—
  Which is so great that there I go
All the day long to and fro,
And when the night begins to fall
Throw down my bed and sleep, while all
The building hums with wakefulness—
Even as a child of savages
When evening takes her on her way,
(She having roamed a summer's day
Along the mountain-sides and scalp)
Sleeps in an antre of that alp:—
  Which is so broad and high that there,
As in the topless fields of air,
My fancy soars like to a kite
And faints in the blue infinite:—
  Which is so strong, my strongest throes
And the rough world's besieging blows

Not break it, and so weak withal,
Death ebbs and flows in its loose wall
As the green sea in fishers' nets,
And tops its topmost parapets:—
  Which is so wholly mine that I
Can wield its whole artillery,
And mine so little, that my soul
Dwells in perpetual control,
And I but think and speak and do
As my dead fathers move me to:—
  If this born body of my bones
The beggared soul so barely owns,
What money passed from hand to hand,
What creeping custom of the land,
What deed of author or assign,
Can make a house a thing of mine?

XXXVIII

Say not of me that weakly I declined
The labors of my sires, and fled the sea,
The towers we founded and the lamps we lit,
To play at home with paper like a child.
But rather say: *In the afternoon of time*
A strenuous family dusted from its hands
The sand of granite, and beholding far
Along the sounding coast its pyramids
And tall memorials catch the dying sun,
Smiled well content, and to this childish task
Around the fire addressed its evening hours.

BOOK II—IN SCOTS

TABLE OF COMMON SCOTTISH VOWEL SOUNDS

ae, ai } = open A as in rare.
a', au, aw } = AW as in law.
ea = open E as in mere, but this with exceptions, as heather = heather, wean = wain, lear = liar.
ee, ei, ie } = open E as in mere.
oa = open O as in more.
ou = doubled O as in poor.
ow = OW as in Bower.
u = doubled O as in poor.
ui or ü before R = (say roughly) open A as in rare.
ui or ü before any other consonant = (say roughly) close I as in grin.
y = open I as in kite.
i = pretty nearly what you please, much as in English. Heaven guide the reader through that labyrinth! But in Scots it dodges usually from the short I, as in grin, to the open E, as in mere. Find and blind, I may remark, are pronounced to rhyme with the preterite of grin.

I

THE MAKER TO POSTERITY

Far 'yont amang the years to be
When a' we think, an' a' we see,
An' a' we luve, 's been dung ajee
By time's rouch shouther,
An' what was richt and wrang for me
Lies mangled throu'ther,

It's possible—it's hardly mair—
That some ane, ripin' after lear—
Some auld professor or young heir,
If still there's either—
May find an' read me, an' be sair
Perplexed, puir brither!

"*What tongue does your auld bookie speak?*"
He'll spier; an' I, his mou to steik:
"*No bein' fit to write in Greek,*
I wrote in Lallan,
Dear to my heart as the peat reek,
Auld as Tantallon.

"*Few spak it than, an' noo there's nane.*
My puir auld sangs lie a' their lane,
Their sense, that aince was braw an' plain,
Tint a'thegether,
Like runes upon a standin' stane
Amang the heather.

"*But think not you the brae to speel;*
You, tae, maun chow the bitter peel;
For a' your lear, for a' your skeel,
Ye're nane sae lucky;
An' things are mebbe waur than weel
For you, my buckie.

"*The hale concern (baith hens an eggs,*
Baith books an' writers, stars an' clegs)
Noo stachers upon lowsent legs
An' wears awa';
The tack o' mankind, near the dregs,
Rins unco law.

"*Your book, that in some braw new tongue,*
Ye wrote or prentit, preached or sung,

Will still be just a bairn, an' young
In fame an' years,
Whan the hale planet's guts are dung
About your ears;

"An' you, sair gruppin' to a spar
Or whammled wi' some bleezin' star,
Cryin' to ken whaur deil ye are,
Hame, France, or Flanders—
Whang sindry like a railway car
An' flie in danders."

II

ILLE TERRARUM

Frae nirly, nippin', Eas'lan' breeze,
Frae Norlan' snaw, an' haar o' seas,
Weel happit in your garden trees,
A bonny bit,
Atween the muckle Pentland's knees,
Secure ye sit.

Beeches an' aiks entwine their theek,
An' firs, a stench, auld-farrant clique.
A' simmer day, your chimleys reek,
Couthy and bien;
An' here an' there your windies keek
Amang the green.

A pickle plats an' paths an' posies,
A wheen auld gillyflowers an' roses:
A ring o' wa's the hale incloses
Frae sheep or men;
An' there the auld housie beeks and dozes
A' by her lane.

The gairdner crooks his weary back
A' day in the pitaty-track,
Or mebbe stops a while to crack
Wi' Jane the cook,
Or at some buss, worm-eaten-black,
To gie a look.

Frae the high hills the curlew ca's;
The sheep gang baaing by the wa's;
Or whiles a clan o' roosty craws
Cangle together;
The wild bees seek the gairden raws,
Weariet wi' heather.

Or in the gloamin' douce an' gray
The sweet-throat mavis tunes her lay;
The herd comes linkin' doun the brae;
An' by degrees
The muckle siller müne maks way
Amang the trees.

Here aft hae I, wi' sober heart,
For meditation sat apairt,
When orra löves or kittle art
Perplexed my mind;
Here socht a balm for ilka smart
O' humankind.

Here aft, weel neukit by my lane,
Wi' Horace, or perhaps Montaigne,
The mornin' hours hae come an' gane
Abüne my heid—
I wadnae gi'en a chucky-stane
For a' I'd read.

But noo the auld city, street by street,
An' winter fu' o' snaw an' sleet,

A while shut in my gangrel feet
An' goavin' mettle;
Noo is the soopit ingle sweet,
An' liltin' kettle.

An' noo the winter winds complain;
Cauld lies the glaur in ilka lane;
On draigled hizzie, tautit wean
An' drucken lads,
In the mirk nicht, the winter rain
Dribbles an' blads.

Whan bugles frae the Castle rock,
An' beaten drums wi' dowie shock,
Wauken, at cauld-rife sax o'clock,
My chitterin' frame,
I mind me on the kintry cock,
The kintry hame.

I mind me on yon bonny bield;
An' Fancy traivels far afield
To gaither a' that gairdens yield
O' sun an' Simmer:
To hearten up a dowie chield,
Fancy's the limmer!

III

When aince Aprile has fairly come,
An' birds may bigg in winter's lum,
An' pleisure's spreid for a' and some
O' whatna state,
Love, wi' her auld recruitin' drum,
Than taks the gate.

The heart plays dunt wi' main an' micht;
The lasses' een are a' sae bricht,

Their dresses are sae braw an' ticht,
The bonny birdies!—
Puir winter virtue at the sicht
Gangs heels ower hurdies.

An' aye as love frae land to land
Tirls the drum wi' eident hand,
A' men collect at her command,
Toun-bred or land'art,
An' follow in a denty band
Her gaucy standart.

An' I, wha sang o' rain an' snaw,
An' weary winter weel awa',
Noo busk me in a jacket braw,
An' tak my place
I' the ram-stam, harum-scarum raw,
Wi' smilin' face.

IV

A MILE AN' A BITTOCK

A MILE an' a bittock, a mile or twa,
Abüne the burn, ayont the law,
Davie an' Donal' an' Cherlie an' a',
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Ane went hame wi' the ither, an' then
The ither went hame wi' the ither twa men,
An' baith wad return him the service again,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

The clocks were chappin' in house an' ha',
Eleeven, twal an' ane an' twa;
An' the guidman's face was turnt to the wa',
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

A wind got up frae affa the sea,
It blew the stars as clear's could be;
It blew in the een of a' o' the three,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Noo, Davie was first to get sleep in his head,
"The best o' frien's maun twine," he said;
"I'm weariet, an' here I'm awa' to my bed."
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Twa o' them walkin' an' crackin' in their lane,
The mornin' licht cam gray an' plain,
An' the birds they yammert on stick an' stane,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

O years ayont, O years awa',
My lads, ye'll mind whate'er befa'—
My lads, ye'll mind on the bield o' the law,
When the müne was shinin' clearly.

V

A LOWDEN SABBATH MORN

The clinkum-clark o' Sabbath bells
Noo to the hoastin' rookery swells,
Noo faintin' laigh in shady dells,
Sounds far an' near,
An' through the simmer kintry tells
Its tale o' cheer.

An' noo, to that melodious play,
A' deidly awn the quiet sway—
A' ken their solemn holiday,
Bestial an' human,
The singin' lintie on the brae,
The restin' plou'man.

He, mair than a' the lave o' men,
His week completit joys to ken;
Half-dressed, he daunders out an' in,
Perplext wi' leisure;
An' his raxt limbs he'll rax again
Wi' painfü' pleesure.

The steerin' mither strang afit
Noo shoos the bairnies but a bit;
Noo cries them ben, their Sinday shüit
To scart upon them,
Or sweeties in their pouch to pit,
Wi' blessin's on them.

The lasses, clean frae tap to taes,
Are busked in crunklin' underclaes;
The gartened hose, the weel-filled stays,
The nakit shift,
A' bleached on bonny greens for days,
An' white's the drift.

An' noo to face the kirkward mile:
The guidman's hat o' dacent style,
The blackit shoon, we noo maun fyle
As white's the miller;
A waefü' peety tae, to spile
The warth o' siller.

Our Marg'et, aye sae keen to crack,
Douce-stappin' in the stoury track,
Her emeralt goun a' kiltit back
Frae snawy coats,
White-ankled, leads the kirkward pack
Wi' Dauvit Groats.

A thocht ahint, in runkled breeks
A' spiled wi' lyin' by for weeks,

The guidman follows closs, an' cleiks
The sonsie missis;
His sarious face at aince bespeaks
The day that this is.

And aye an' while we nearer draw
To whaur the kirton lies alaw,
Mair neebors, comin' saft an' slaw
Frae here an' there,
The thicker thrang the gate an' caw
The stour in air.

But hark! the bells frae nearer clang;
To rowst the slaw, their sides they bang;
An' see! black coats a'ready thrang
The green kirkyaird,
And at the yett, the chestnuts spang
That brocht the laird.

The solemn elders at the plate
Stand drinkin' deep the pride o' state:
That practiced hands as gash an' great
As Lords o' Session;
The later named, a wee thing blate
In their expression.

The prentit stanes that mark the deid,
Wi' lengthened lip, the sarious read;
Syne wag a moraleesin' heid,
An' then an' there
Their hirplin' practice an' their creed
Try hard to square.

It's here our Merren lang has lain,
A wee bewast the table-stane;
An' yon's the grave o' Sandy Blane;
An' further ower,
The mither's brithers, dacent men!
Lie a' the fower.

Here the guidman sall bide awee
To dwall amang the deid; to see
Auld faces clear in fancy's e'e;
Belike to hear
Auld voices fa'in' saft an' slee
On fancy's ear.

Thus, on the day o' solemn things,
The bell that in the steeple swings
To fauld a scaittered faim'ly rings
Its walcome screed;
An' just a wee thing nearer brings
The quick an' deid.

But noo the bell is ringin' in;
To tak their places, folk begin;
The minister himsel' will shüne
Be up the gate,
Filled fu' wi' clavers about sin
An' man's estate.

The tünes are up—*French*, to be shüre,
The faithfü' *French*, an' twa-three mair.
The auld prezentor, hoastin' sair,
Wales out the portions,
An' yirks the tüne into the air
Wi' queer contortions.

Follows the prayer, the readin' next,
An' than the fisslin' for the text—
The twa-three last to find it, vext
But kind o' proud;
An' than the peppermints are raxed,
An' southernwood.

For noo's the time whan pows are seen
Nid-noddin' like a mandareen;
When tenty mithers stap a preen
In sleepin' weans;

An' nearly half the parochine
Forget their pains.

There's just a waukrif' twa or three:
Thrawn commentautors sweer to 'gree,
Weans glowrin' at the bumblin' bee
On the windie-glasses,
Or lads that tak a keek a-glee.
At sonsie lasses.

Himsel', meanwhile, frae whaur he cocks
An' bobs belaw the soundin'-box,
The treesures of his words unlocks
Wi' prodigality,
An' deals some unco dingin' knocks
To infidality.

Wi' sappy unction, hoo he burkes
The hopes o' men that trust in works,
Expounds the fau'ts o' ither kirks,
An' shaws the best o' them
No muckle better than mere Turks,
When a's confessed o' them.

Bethankit! what a bonny creed!
What mair would ony Christian need?—
The braw words rumm'le ower his heid,
Nor steer the sleeper;
An' in their restin' graves, the deid
Sleep aye the deeper.

Note.—It may be guessed by some that I had a certain parish in my eye, and this makes it proper I should add a word of disclamation. In my time there have been two ministers in that parish. Of the first I have a special reason to speak well, even had there been any to think ill. The second I have often met in private and long (in the due phrase) "sat under" in his church, and neither here nor there have I heard an unkind or ugly word upon his lips. The preacher of the text had thus no original in that particular parish; but when I was a boy, he might have been observed in many others; he was then (like the schoolmaster) abroad; and by recent advices, it would seem he has not yet entirely disappeared.

VI

THE SPAEWIFE

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Why chops are guid to brander and nane sae good to fry.
An' siller, that's sae braw to keep, is brawer still to gi'e.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Hoo a' things come to be whaur we find them when we try,
The lasses in their claes an' the fishes in the sea.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Why lads are a' to sell an' lasses a' to buy;
An' nacbody for dacency but barely twa or three.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
Gin death's as shüre to men as killin' is to kye,
Why God has filled the yearth sae fu' o' tasty things to pree.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

O, I wad like to ken—to the beggar-wife says I—
The reason o' the cause an' the wherefore o' the why,
Wi' mony anither riddle brings the tear into my e'e.
—*It's gey an easy spierin'*, says the beggar-wife to me.

VII

THE BLAST—1875

It's rainin'. Weet's the gairden sod
Weet the lang roads whaur gangrels plod—
A maist unceevil thing o' God
In mid July—
If ye'll just curse the sneckdraw, dod!
An' sae wull I!

He's a braw place in heev'n, ye ken,
An' lea's us puir, forjaskit men
Clamjamfried in the but and ben
He ca's the earth—
A wee bit inconvenient den
No muckle worth;

An' whiles, at orra times, keeks out,
Sees what puir mankind are about;
An' if He can, I've little doubt,
Upsets their plans;
He hates a' mankind, brainch and root,
An' a' that's man's.

An' whiles, whan they tak heart again,
An' life i' the sun looks braw an' plain,
Doun comes a jaw o' droukin' rain
Upon their honors—
God sends a spate outower the plain,
Or mebbe thun'ers.

Lord safe us, life's an unco thing!
Simmer an' Winter, Yule an' Spring,
The damned, dour-heartit seasons bring
A feck o' trouble.
I wadna try't to be a king—
No, nor for double.

But since we're in it, willy-nilly,
We maun be watchfü, wise an' skilly
An' no mind ony ither billy,
Lassie nor God.
But drink—that's my best counsel till 'e:
Sae tak the nod.

VIII

THE COUNTERBLAST—1886

My bonny man, the warld, it's true,
Was made for neither me nor you;
It's just a place to warstle through,
As Job confessed o't;
And aye the best that we'll can do
Is mak the best o't.

There's rowth o' wrang, I'm free to say:
The simmer brunt, the winter blae,
The face of earth a' fyled wi' clay
An' dour wi' chuckies,
An' life a rough an' land'art play
For country buckies.

An' food's anither name for clart;
An' beasts an' brambles bite an' scart;
An' what would we be like, my heart!
If bared o' claethin'?
—Aweel, I cannae mend your cart:
It's that or naethin'.

A feck o' folk frae first to last
Have through this queer experience passed;
Twa-three, I ken, just damn an' blast
The hale transaction;
But twa-three ithers, east an' wast,
Fand satisfaction.

Whaur braid the briery muirs expand,
A waefü' an' a weary land,
The bumblebees, a gowden band,
Are blithely hingin';
An' there the canty wanderer fand
The laverock singin'.

Trout in the burn grow great as herr'n',
The simple sheep can find their fair'n';
The wind blaws clean about the cairn
Wi' caller air;
The muircock an' the barefit bairn
Are happy there.

Sic-like the howes o' life to some:
Green loans whaur they ne'er fash their thumb,
But mark the muckle winds that come,
Soopin' an' cool,
Or hear the powrin' burnie drum
In the shilfa's pool.

The evil wi' the guid they tak;
They ca' a gray thing gray, no black;
To a steigh brae, a stubborn back
Addressin' daily;
An' up the rude, unbieldy track
O' life, gang gayly.

What you would like's a palace ha',
Or Sinday parlor dink an' braw
Wi' a' things ordered in a raw
By denty leddies.
Weel, than, ye cannae hae't: that's a'
That to be said is.

An' since at life ye've taen the grue,
An' winnae blithely hirsle through,

Ye've fund the very thing to do—
That's to drink speerit;
An' shüne we'll hear the last o' you—
An' blithe to hear it!

The shoon ye coft, the life ye lead,
Ithers will heir when aince ye're deid;
They'll heir your tasteless bite o' breid,
An' find it sappy;
They'll to your dulefü' house succeed,
An' there be happy.

As whan a glum an' fractious wean
Has sat an' sullened by his lane
Till, wi' a rowstin' skelp, he's taen
An' shoo'd to bed—
The ither bairns a' fa' to play'n',
As gleg's a gled.

IX

THE COUNTERBLAST IRONICAL

It's strange that God should fash to frame
The yearth and lift sae hie,
An' clean forget to explain the same
To a gentleman like me.

They gusty, donnered ither folk,
Their weird they weel may dree;
But why present a pig in a poke
To a gentleman like me?

They ither folk their parritch eat
An' sup their sugared tea;
But the mind is no to be wyled wi' meat
Wi' a gentleman like me.

They ither folk, they court their joes
At gloamin' on the lea;
But they're made of a commoner clay, I suppose,
Than a gentleman like me.

They ither folk, for richt or wrang,
They suffer, bleed, or dee;
But a' thir things are an emp'y sang
To a gentleman like me.

It's a different thing that I demand,
Tho' humble as can be—
A statement fair in my Maker's hand
To a gentleman like me:

A clear account writ fair an' broad,
An' a plain apologie;
Or the deevil a ceevil word to God
From a gentleman like me.

X

THEIR LAUREATE TO AN ACADEMY CLASS DINNER CLUB

Dear Thamson class, whaure'er I gang
It aye comes ower me wi' a spang:
"*Lordsake! they Thamson lads—(deil hang*
Or else Lord mend them!)—
An' that wanchancy annual sang
I ne'er can send them!"

Straucht, at the name a trusty tyke,
My conscience girrs ahint the dyke;
Straucht on my hinderlands I fyke
To find a rhyme t' ye;
Pleased—although mebbe no pleased-like—
To gie my time t' ye.

" Weel," an' says you, wi' heavin' breist,
" Sae far, sae guid, but what's the neist?
Yearly we gaither to the feast,
A' hopefu' men—
Yearly we skelloch 'Hang the beast—
Nae sang again!' "

My lads, an' what am I to say?
Ye shürely ken the Muse's way:
Yestreen, as gleg's a tyke—the day,
Thrawn like a cuddy:
Her conduc', that to her's a play;
Deith to a body.

Aft whan I sat an' made my mane,
Aft whan I labored burd-alane
Fishin' for rhymes an' findin' nane,
Or nane were fit for ye—
Ye judged me cauld's a chucky stane—
No car'n' a bit for ye!

But saw ye ne'er some pingein' bairn
As weak as a pitaty-par'n'—
Less üsed wi' guidin' horse-shoe airn
Than steerin' crowdie—
Packed aff his lane, by moss an' cairn,
To ca' the howdie.

Wae's me, for the puir callant than!
He wambles like a poke o' bran,
An' the lowse rein, as hard's he can,
Pu's, trem'lin' handit;
Till, blaff! upon his hinderlan'
Behauld him landit.

Sic-like—I awn the weary fac'—
Whan on my muse the gate I tak,

An' see her gleed e'e raxin' back
To keek ahint her;—
To me the brig of heev'n gangs black
As blackest winter.

"*Lordsake! we're aff*," thinks I, "*but whaur?*
On what abhorred and whinny scaur,
Or whammled in what sea o' glaur,
Will she desert me?
An' will she just disgrace? or waur—
Will she no hurt me?"

Kittle the quaere! But at least
The day I've backed the fashious beast,
While she, wi' mony a spang an' reist,
Flang heels ower bonnet;
An' a' triumphant—for your feast,
Hae! there's your sonnet!

XI

EMBRO HIE KIRK

The Lord Himsel' in former days
Waled out the proper tünes for praise
An' named the proper kind o' claes
For folk to preach in:
Preceese and in the chief o' ways
Important teachin'.

He ordered a' things, late and air';
He ordered folk to stand at prayer
(Although I cannae just mind where
He gave the warnin')
An' pit pomatum on their hair
On Sabbath mornin'.

The haie o' life by His commands
Was ordered to a body's hands;
But see! this *corpus juris* stands
By a' forgotten;
An' God's religion in a' lands
Is deid an' rotten.

While thus the lave o' mankind's lost
O' Scotland still God makes his boast—
Puir Scotland, on whase barren coast
A score or twa
Auld wives wi' mutches an' a hoast
Still keep His law.

In Scotland, a wheen canty, plain,
Douce kintry-leevin' folk retain
The Truth—or did so aince—alane
Of a' men leevin';
An' noo just twa o' them remain—
Just Begg an' Niven.

For noo, unfaithfü' to the Lord
Auld Scotland joins the rebel horde;
Her human hymn-books on the board
She noo displays:
An' Embro Hie Kirk's been restored
In popish ways.

O punctum temporis for action
To a' o' the reformin' faction,
If yet, by ony act or paction,
Thocht, word, or sermon,
This dark an' damnable transaction
Micht yet determine!

For see—as Doctor Begg explains—
Hoo easy 't's düne! a pickle weans,

Wha in the Hie Street gaither stanes
By his instruction,
The uncovenantit, pentit panes
Ding to destruction.

Up, Niven, or ower late—an' dash
Laigh in the glaur that carnal hash;
Let spires and pews wi' gran' stramash
Thegether fa';
The rumlin' kist o' whustles smash
In pieces sma'.

Noo choose ye out a walie hammer;
About the knottit buttress clam'er;
Alang the steep roof stoyt an' stammer,
A gate mis-chancy;
On the aul' spire, the bells' hie cha'mer,
Dance your bit dancie.

Ding, devel, dunt, destroy, an' ruin,
Wi' carnal stanes the square bestrewin',
Till your loud chaps frae Kyle to Fruin,
Frae hell to heeven,
Tell the guid wark that baith are doin'—
Baith Begg an' Niven.

XII

THE SCOTSMAN'S RETURN FROM ABROAD

(In a letter from Mr. Thomson to Mr. Johnstone)

In mony a foreign pairt I've been,
An' mony an unco ferlie seen,
Since, Mr. Johnstone, you and I
Last walkit upon Cocklerye.

Wi' gleg, observant een, I pass't
By sea an' land, through East and Wast,
And still in ilka age an' station
Saw naething but abomination.
In thir uncovenantit lands
The gangrel Scot uplifts his hands
At lack of a' sectarian füsh'n,
An' cauld religious destitütion.
He rins, puir man, frae place to place,
Tries a' their graceless means o' grace,
Preacher on preacher, kirk on kirk—
This yin a stot an' thon a stirk—
A bletherin' clan, no warth a preen,
As bad as Smith of Aiberdeen!

At last, across the weary faem,
Frae far, outlandish pairts I came.
On ilka side o' me I fand
Fresh tokens o' my native land.
Wi' whatna joy I hailed them a'—
The hilltaps standin' raw by raw,
The public house, the Hielan' birks,
And a' the bonny U. P. kirks!
But maistly thee, the bluid o' Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to John o' Grots,
The king o' drinks, as I conceive it,
Talisker, Isla, or Glenlivet!

For after years wi' a pockmantie
Frae Zanzibar to Alicante,
In mony a fash an' sair affliction
I gie't as my sincere conviction—
Of a' their foreign tricks an' pliskies,
I maist abominate their whiskies.
Nae doot, themsel's, they ken it weel,
An' wi' a hash o' leemon peel,
An' ice an' siccan filth, they ettle
The stawsome kind o' goo to settle;

Sic wersh apothecary's broos wi'
As Scotsmen scorn to fyle their moo's wi'.

An', man, I was a blithe hame-comer
When first I syndit out my rummer.
Ye should hae seen me then, wi' care
The less important pairts prepare;
Syne, weel contentit wi' it a',
Pour in the speerits wi' a jaw!
I didnae drink, I didnae speak—
I only snowkit up the reek.
I was sae pleased therein to paidle,
I sat an' plowtered wi' my ladle.

An' blithe was I, the morrow's morn,
To daunder through the stookit corn,
And after a' my strange mishanters,
Sit doun amang my ain dissenters.
An', man, it was a joy to me
The pu'pit an' the pews to see,
The pennies dirlin' in the plate,
The elders lookin' on in state;
An' 'mang the first, as it befell,
Wha should I see, sir, but yoursel'?

I was, and I will no deny it,
At the first gliff a hantle tryit
To see yoursel' in sic a station—
It seemed a doubtfü' dispensation.
The feelin' was a mere digression;
For shüne I understood the session,
An' mindin Aiken an' M'Neil,
I wondered they had düne sae weel.
I saw I had mysel' to blame;
For had I but remained at hame,
Aiblins—though no ava' deservin' 't—
They micht hae named your humble servant.

The kirk was filled, the door was steeked;
Up to the pu'pit ance I keeked;
I was mair pleased than I can tell—
It was the minister himsel'!
Proud, proud was I to see his face,
After sae lang awa' frae grace.
Pleased as I was, I'm no denyin'
Some maitters were not edifyin';
For first I fand—an' here was news!—
Mere hymn-books cockin' in the pews—
A humanized abomination,
Unfit for ony congregation.
Syne, while I still was on the tenter,
I scunnered at the new prezentor;
I thocht him gesterin' an' cauld—
A sair declension frae the auld.
Syne, as though a' the faith was wreckit,
The prayer was not what I'd exspeckit.
Himsel', as it appeared to me,
Was no the man he üsed to be.
But just as I was growin' vext
He waled a maist judeecious text,
An' launchin' into his prelections,
Swoopt, wi' a skirl, on a' defections.

O what a gale was on my speerit
To hear the p'ints o' doctrine clearit,
And a' the horrors o' damnation
Set furth wi' faithfü' ministration!
Nae shauchlin' testimony here—
We were a' damned, an' that was clear.
I owned, wi' gratitude an' wonder,
He was a pleisure to sit under.

XIII

Late in the nicht in bed I lay,
The winds were at their weary play,
An' tirlin' wa's an' skirlin' wae
Through heev'n they battered;—
On-ding o' hail, on-blaff o' spray,
The tempest blattered.

The masoned house it dinled through;
It dung the ship, it cowped the coo';
The rankit aiks it overthrew,
Had braved a' weathers:
The strang sea-gleds it took an' blew
Awa' like feathers.

The thraes o' fear on a' were shed,
An' the hair rose, an' slumber fled,
An' lichts were lit an' prayers were said
Through a' the kintry;
An' the cauld terror clum in bed
Wi' a' an' sindry.

To hear in the pit-mirk on hie
The brangled collieshangie flie,
The warl' they thocht, wi' land an' sea,
Itsel' wad cowpit;
An' for auld airn, the smashed debris
By God be rowpit.

Meanwhile frae far Aldeboran,
To folks wi' talescopes in han',
O' ships that cowpit, winds that ran,
Nae sign was seen,
But the wee warl' in sunshine span
As bricht's a preen.

I, tae, by God's especial grace,
Dwall denty in a bieldy place,
Wi' hosened feet, wi' shaven face,
Wi' dacent mainners:
A grand example to the race
O' tautit sinners!

The wind may blaw, the heathen rage,
The deil may start on the rampage;—
The sick in bed, the thief in cage—
What's a' to me?
Cosh in my house, a sober sage,
I sit an' see.

An' whiles the bluid spangs to my bree,
To lie sae saft, to live sae free,
While better men maun do an' die
In unco places.
"*Whaur's God?*" I cry, an' "*Whae is me*
To hae sic graces?"

I mind the fecht the sailors keep,
But fire or can'le, rest or sleep,
In darkness an' the muckle deep;
An' mind beside
The herd that on the hills o' sheep
Has wandered wide.

I mind me on the hoastin' weans—
The penny joes on causey stanes—
The auld folk wi' the crazy banes,
Baith auld an' puir,
That aye maun thole the winds an' rains
An' labor sair.

An' whiles I'm kind o' pleased a blink,
An' kind o' fleyed forby, to think,

For a' my rowth o' meat an' drink
An' waste o' crumb,
I'll mebbe have to thole wi' skink
In Kingdom Come.

For God whan jowes the Judgment bell,
Wi' His ain Hand, His Leevin' Sel',
Sall ryve the guid (as Prophets tell)
Frae them that had it;
And in the reamin' pat o' hell,
The rich be scaddit.

O Lord, if this indeed be sae,
Let daw that sair an' happy day!
Again' the warl, grawn auld an' gray,
Up wi' your aixe!
An' let the puir enjoy their play—
I'll thole my paiks.

XIV

MY CONSCIENCE!

Of a' the ills that flesh can fear,
The loss o' frien's, the lack o' gear,
A yowlin' tyke, a glandered mear,
A lassie's nonsense—
There's just ae thing I cannae bear,
An' that's my conscience.

Whan day (an' a' excüse) has gane,
An' wark is düne, an' duty's plain,
An' to my chalmer a' my lane
I creep apairt,
My conscience! hoo the yammerin' pain
Stends to my heart!

A' day wi' various ends in view
The hairsts o' time I had to pu',
An' made a hash wad staw a soo,
Let be a man!—
My conscience! whan my han's were fü',
Whaur were ye than?

An' there were a' the lures o' life,
There pleesure skirlin' on the fife,
There anger, wi' the hotchin' knife
Ground shairp in hell—
My conscience!—you that's like a wife!—
Whaur was yoursel'?

I ken it fine: just waitin' here,
To gar the evil waur appear,
To clart the guid, confüse the clear,
Mis-ca' the great,
My conscience! an' to raise a steer
Whan a's ower late.

Sic-like, some tyke grawn auld and blind,
Whan thieves brok' through the gear to p'ind,
Has lain his dozened length an' grinned
At the disaster;
An' the morn's mornin', wud's the wind,
Yokes on his master.

XV

TO DOCTOR JOHN BROWN

(Whan the dear doctor, dear to a',
Was still amang us here belaw,
I seb my pipes his praise to blaw
Wi' a' my speerit;
But noo, Dear Doctor, he's awa',
An' ne'er can hear it.)

By Lyne and Tyne, by Thames and Tees,
By a' the various river-Dee's,
In Mars and Manors 'yont the seas
Or here at hame,
Whaure'er there's kindly folk to please,
They ken your name.

They ken your name, they ken your tyke,
They ken the honey from your byke;
But mebbe after a' your fyke,
(The trüth to tell)
It's just your honest Rab they like,
An' no yoursel'.

As at the gowff, some canny play'r
Should tee a common ba' wi' care—
Should flourish and deleever fair
His souple shintie—
An' the ba' rise into the air,
A leevin' lintie:

Sae in the game we writers play,
There comes to some a bonny day,
When a dear ferlie shall repay
Their years o' strife,
An' like your Rab, their things o' clay,
Spreid wings o' life.

Ye scarce deserved it, I'm afraid—
You that had never learned the trade,
But just some idle mornin' strayed
Into the schüle,
An' picked the fiddle up an' played
Like Neil himsel'.

Your e'e was gleg, your fingers dink;
Ye didna fash yoursel' to think,

But wove, as fast as puss can link,
Your denty wab:—
Ye stapped your pen into the ink,
An' there was Rab!

Sinsyne, whaure'er your fortune lay
By dowie den, by canty brae,
Simmer an' winter, nicht an' day,
Rab was aye wi' ye;
An' a' the folk on a' the way
Were blithe to see ye.

O sir, the gods are kind indeed,
An' hauld ye for an honored heid,
That for a wee bit clarkit screed
Sae weel reward ye,
An' lend—puir Rabbie bein' deid—
His ghaist to guard ye.

For though, whaure'er yoursel' may be,
We've just to turn an' glisk a wee,
An' Rab at heel we're shüre to see
Wi' gladsome caper:—
The bogle of a bogle, he—
A ghaist o' paper!

And as the auld farrand hero sees
In hell a bogle Hercules,
Pit there the lesser deid to please,
While he himsel'
Dwalls wi' the muckle gods at ease
Far raised frae hell:

Sae the true Rabbie far has gane
On kindlier business o' his ain
Wi' aulder frien's; an' his breist-bane
An' stumpie tailie,
He birstles at a new hearth stane
By James and Ailie.

XVI

It's an owercome sooth for age an' youth
And it brooks wi' nae denial,
That the dearest friends are the auldest friends
And the young are just on trial.

There's a rival bauld wi' young an' auld
And it's him that has bereft me;
For the sürest friends are the auldest friends
And the maist o' mine hae left me.

There are kind hearts still, for friends to fill
And fools to take and break them;
But the nearest friends are the auldest friends
And the grave's the place to seek them.

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

TO ALISON CUNNINGHAM

(FROM HER BOY)

For the long nights you lay awake
And watched for my unworthy sake:
For your most comfortable hand
That led me through the uneven land:
For all the story-books you read:
For all the pains you comforted:
For all you pitied, all you bore,
In sad and happy days of yore:—
My second Mother, my first Wife,
The angel of my infant life—
From the sick child, now well and old
Take, nurse, the little book you hold!

And grant it, Heaven, that all who read
May find as dear a nurse at need,
And every child who lists my rhyme,
In the bright, fireside, nursery clime,
May hear it in as kind a voice
As made my childish days rejoice!

R. L. S.

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A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

I

BED IN SUMMER

In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

II

A THOUGHT

It is very nice to think
The world is full of meat and drink,
With little children saying grace
In every Christian kind of place.

III

AT THE SEASIDE

When I was down beside the sea
A wooden spade they gave to me
To dig the sandy shore.
My holes were empty like a cup,
In every hole the sea came up,
Till it could come no more.

IV

YOUNG NIGHT THOUGHT

All night long and every night,
When my mamma puts out the light,
I see the people marching by,
As plain as day, before my eye.

Armies and emperors and kings,
All carrying different kinds of things,
And marching in so grand a way,
You never saw the like by day.

So fine a show was never seen,
At the great circus on the green;
For every kind of beast and man
Is marching in that caravan.

At first they move a little slow,
But still the faster on they go,
And still beside them close I keep
Until we reach the town of Sleep.

V

WHOLE DUTY OF CHILDREN

A CHILD should always say what's true
And speak when he is spoken to,
And behave mannerly at table:
At least as far as he is able.

VI

RAIN

THE rain is raining all around,
It falls on field and tree,
It rains on the umbrellas here,
And on the ships at sea.

VII

PIRATE STORY

THREE of us afloat in the meadow by the swing,
Three of us aboard in the basket on the lea.
Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,
And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.

Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,
Wary of the weather and steering by a star?
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,
To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar?

Hi! but here's a squadron a-rowing on the sea—
Cattle on the meadow a-charging with a roar!
Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as they
can be,
The wicket is the harbor and the garden is the shore.

VIII

FOREIGN LANDS

Up into the cherry tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping into town.

If I could find a higher tree
Further and further I should see,
To where the grown up river slips
Into the sea among the ships,

To where the roads on either hand
Lead onward into fairy land,
Where all the children dine at five,
And all the playthings come alive.

IX

WINDY NIGHTS

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

X

TRAVEL

I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow;—
Where below another sky
Parrot islands anchored lie,
And, watched by cockatoos and goats,
Lonely Crusoes building boats;—
Where in sunshine reaching out
Eastern cities, miles about,
Are with mosque and minaret
Among sandy gardens set,
And the rich goods from near and far
Hang for sale in the bazaar;—
Where the Great Wall round China goes,
And on one side the desert blows,

And with bell and voice and drum,
Cities on the other hum;—
Where are forests, hot as fire,
Wide as England, tall as a spire,
Full of apes and cocoa-nuts
And the negro hunters' huts;—
Where the knotty crocodile
Lies and blinks in the Nile,
And the red flamingo flies
Hunting fish before his eyes;—
Where in jungles, near and far,
Man-devouring tigers are,
Lying close and giving ear
Lest the hunt be drawing near,
Or a comer-by be seen
Swinging in a palanquin;—
Where among the desert sands
Some deserted city stands,
All its children, sweep and prince
Grown to manhood ages since,
Not a foot in street or house,
Not a stir of child or mouse,
And when kindly falls the night,
In all the town no spark of light.
There I'll come when I'm a man
With a camel caravan;
Light a fire in the gloom
Of some dusty dining-room;
See the pictures on the walls,
Heroes, fights and festivals;
And in a corner find the toys
Of the old Egyptian boys.

XI

SINGING

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings
And nests among the trees;
The sailor sings of ropes and things
In ships upon the seas.

The children sing in far Japan,
The children sing in Spain;
The organ with the organ man
Is singing in the rain.

XII

LOOKING FORWARD

When I am grown to man's estate
I shall be very proud and great,
And tell the other girls and boys
Not to meddle with my toys.

XIII

A GOOD PLAY

We built a ship upon the stairs
All made of the back-bedroom chairs,
And filled it full of sofa pillows
To go a-sailing on the billows.

We took a saw and several nails,
And water in the nursery pails;
And Tom said, "Let us also take
An apple and a slice of cake;"—
Which was enough for Tom and me
To go a-sailing on, till tea.

We sailed along for days and days
And had the very best of plays;
But Tom fell out and hurt his knee,
So there was no one left but me.

XIV

WHERE GO THE BOATS?

Dark brown is the river,
Golden is the sand.
It flows along forever,
With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,
Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating—
Where will all come home?

On goes the river
And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
Away down the hill.

Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore.

XV

AUNTIE'S SKIRTS

Whenever Auntie moves around,
Her dresses make a curious sound;
They trail behind her up the floor,
And trundle after through the door.

XVI

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

XVII

THE LAND OF NOD

From breakfast on through all the day
At home among my friends I stay;
But every night I go abroad
Afar into the land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go,
With none to tell me what to do—
All alone beside the streams
And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me,
Both things to eat and things to see
And many frightening sights abroad
Till morning in the land of Nod.

Try as I like to find the way,
I never can get back by day,
Nor can remember plain and clear
The curious music that I hear.

XVIII

MY SHADOW

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;

For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india rubber
ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him
at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks
to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

XIX

SYSTEM

Every night my prayers I say,
And get my dinner every day;
And every day that I've been good,
I get an orange after food.

The child that is not clean and neat,
With lots of toys and things to eat,
He is a naughty child, I'm sure—
Or else his dear papa is poor.

XX

A GOOD BOY

I woke before the morning, I was happy all the day,
I never said an ugly word, but smiled and stuck to play.

And now at last the sun is going down behind the wood,
And I am very happy, for I know that I've been good.

My bed is waiting cool and fresh, with linen smooth and fair,
And I must off to sleepsin-by, and not forget my prayer.

I know that, till to-morrow I shall see the sun arise,
No ugly dream shall fright my mind, no ugly sight my eyes,
But slumber hold me tightly till I waken in the dawn,
And hear the thrushes singing in the lilacs round the lawn.

XXI

ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

The lights from the parlor and kitchen shone out
Through the blinds and the windows and bars;
And high overhead and all moving about,
There were thousands of millions of stars.
There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on a tree,
Nor of people in church or the Park,
As the crowds of the stars that looked down upon me,
And that glittered and winked in the dark.

The Dog, and the Plow, and the Hunter, and all,
And the star of the sailor, and Mars,
These shone in the sky, and the pail by the wall
Would be half full of water and stars.

They saw me at last, and they chased me with cries,
And they soon had me packed into bed;
But the glory kept shining and bright in my eyes,
And the stars going round in my head.

XXII

MARCHING SONG

Bring the comb and play upon it!
Marching, here we come!
Willie cocks his highland bonnet,
Johnnie beats the drum.

Mary Jane commands the party,
Peter leads the rear;
Feet in time, alert and hearty,
Each a Grenadier!

All in the most martial manner
Marching double-quick;
While the napkin like a banner
Waves upon the stick!

Here's enough of fame and pillage,
Great commander Jane!
Now that we've been round the village,
Let's go home again.

XXIII

THE COW

The friendly cow all red and white,
I love with all my heart:
She gives me cream with all her might,
To eat with apple-tart.

She wanders lowing here and there,
  And yet she cannot stray,
All in the pleasant open air,
  The pleasant light of day;

And blown by all the winds that pass
  And wet with all the showers,
She walks among the meadow grass
  And eats the meadow flowers.

XXIV

HAPPY THOUGHT

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

XXV

THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
    O wind, a-blowing all day long,
    O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid,
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
    O wind, a-blowing all day long,
    O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?

Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

XXVI

KEEPSAKE MILL

Over the borders, a sin without pardon,
Breaking the branches and crawling below,
Out through the breach in the wall of the garden,
Down by the banks of the river, we go.

Here is the mill with the humming of thunder,
Here is the weir with the wonder of foam,
Here is the sluice with the race running under—
Marvelous places, though handy to home!

Sounds of the village grow stiller and stiller,
Stiller the notes of the birds on the hill;
Dusty and dim are the eyes of the miller,
Deaf are his ears with the moil of the mill.

Years may go by, and the wheel in the river
Wheels as it wheels for us, children, to-day,
Wheel and keep roaring and foaming forever
Long after all of the boys are away.

Home from the Indies and home from the ocean,
Heroes and soldiers we all shall come home;
Still we shall find the old mill-wheel in motion,
Turning and churning that river to foam.

You with the bean that I gave when we quarreled,
I with your marble of Saturday last,
Honored and old and all gayly appareled,
Here we shall meet and remember the past.

XXVII

GOOD AND BAD CHILDREN

Children, you are very little,
And your bones are very brittle;
If you would grow great and stately,
You must try to walk sedately.

You must still be bright and quiet,
And content with simple diet;
And remain through all bewild'ring,
Innocent and honest children.

Happy hearts and happy faces,
Happy play in grassy places—
That was how in ancient ages,
Children grew to kings and sages.

But the unkind and the unruly,
And the sort who eat unduly,
They must never hope for glory—
Theirs is quite a different story!

Cruel children, crying babies,
All grow up as geese and gabies,
Hated, as their age increases,
By their nephews and their nieces.

XXVIII

FOREIGN CHILDREN

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,
Little frosty Eskimo,
Little Turk or Japanee,
O! don't you wish that you were me?

You have seen the scarlet trees
And the lions over seas;
You have eaten ostrich eggs,
And turned the turtles off their legs.

Such a life is very fine,
But it's not so nice as mine:
You must often, as you trod,
Have wearied *not* to be abroad.

You have curious things to eat,
I am fed on proper meat;
You must dwell beyond the foam,
But I am safe and live at home.

Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,
Little frosty Eskimo,
Little Turk or Japanee,
O! don't you wish that you were me?

XXIX

THE SUN'S TRAVELS

The sun is not a-bed, when I
At night upon my pillow lie;
Still round the earth his way he takes,
And morning after morning makes.

While here at home, in shining day,
We round the sunny garden play,
Each little Indian sleepy-head
Is being kissed and put to bed.

And when at eve I rise from tea,
Day dawns beyond the Atlantic Sea,
And all the children in the West
Are getting up and being dressed.

XXX

THE LAMPLIGHTER

My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky;
It's time to take the window to see Leerie going by;
For every night at teatime and before you take your seat,
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea,
And my papa's a banker and as rich as he can be;
But I, when I am stronger and can choose what I'm to do,
O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the lamps with you.

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door,
And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many more;
And O! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night!

XXXI

MY BED IS A BOAT

My bed is like a little boat;
Nurse helps me in when I embark;
She girds me in my sailor's coat
And starts me in the dark.

At night I go on board and say
Good-night to all my friends in shore;
I shut my eyes and sail away
And see and hear no more.

And sometimes things to bed I take,
As prudent sailors have to do:
Perhaps a slice of wedding-cake,
Perhaps a toy or two.

All night across the dark we steer:
But when the day returns at last,
Safe in my room beside the pier,
I find my vessel fast.

XXXII

THE MOON

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall;
She shines on thieves on the garden wall,
On streets and fields and harbor quays,
And birdies asleep in the forks of the trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse,
The howling dog by the door of the house,
The bat that lies in bed at noon,
All love to be out by the light of the moon.

But all of the things that belong to the day
Cuddle to sleep to be out of her way;
And flowers and children close their eyes
Till up in the morning the sun shall arise.

XXXIII

THE SWING

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside—

Till I look down on the garden green
Down on the roof so brown—
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!

XXXIV

TIME TO RISE

A BIRDIE with a yellow bill
Hopped upon the window-sill,
Cocked his shining eye and said:
"Ain't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head?"

XXXV

LOOKING-GLASS RIVER

SMOOTH it slides upon its travel,
Here a wimple, there a gleam—
O the clean gravel!
O the smooth stream!

Sailing blossoms, silver fishes,
Paven pools as clear as air—
How a child wishes
To live down there!

We can see our colored faces
Floating on the shaken pool
Down in cool places,
Dim and very cool;

Till a wind or water wrinkle,
Dipping martin, plumping trout,
Spreads in a twinkle
And blots all out.

See the rings pursue each other;
All below grows black as night,
Just as if mother
Had blown out the light!

Patience, children, just a minute—
See the spreading circles die;
The stream and all in it
Will clear by-and-by.

XXXVI

FAIRY BREAD

Come up here, O dusty feet!
Here is fairy bread to eat.
Here in my retiring room,
Children, you may dine
On the golden smell of broom
And the shade of pine;
And when you have eaten well,
Fairy stories hear and tell.

XXXVII

FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows the horses and cattle:

All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.
Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;
And there is the green for stringing the daisies!
Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load;
And here is a mill and there is a river:
Each a glimpse and gone forever!

XXXVIII

WINTER-TIME

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,
At morning in the dark I rise;
And shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit
To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or with a reindeer-sled explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap:
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

XXXIX

THE HAYLOFT

Through all the pleasant meadow-side
The grass grew shoulder-high,
Till the shining scythes went far and wide
And cut it down to dry.

These green and sweetly-smelling crops
They led in wagons home:
And they piled them here in mountain-tops
For mountaineers to roam.

Here is Mount Clear, Mount Rusty Nail,
Mount Eagle and Mount High;—
The mice that in these mountains dwell,
No happier are than I!

O what a joy to clamber there,
O what a place for play,
With the sweet, the dim, the dusty air,
The happy hills of hay.

XL

FAREWELL TO THE FARM

The coach is at the door at last;
The eager children mounting fast
And kissing hands, in chorus sing:
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

To house and garden, field and lawn,
The meadow-gates we swung upon,
To pump and stable, tree and swing,
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

And fare you well for evermore,
O ladder at the hayloft door,
O hayloft where the cobwebs cling,
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

Crack goes the whip, and off we go;
The trees and houses smaller grow;
Last, round the woody turn we swing:
Good-by, good-by, to everything!

XLI

NORTH-WEST PASSAGE

1. Good-Night

When the bright lamp is carried in,
The sunless hours again begin;
O'er all without, in field and lane,
The haunted night returns again.

Now we behold the embers flee
About the firelit hearth; and see
Our faces painted as we pass,
Like pictures, on the window-glass.

Must we to bed indeed? Well then,
Let us arise and go like men,
And face with an undaunted tread
The long black passage up to bed.

Farewell, O brother, sister, sire!
O pleasant party round the fire!
The songs you sing, the tales you tell,
Till far to-morrow, fare ye well!

2. Shadow March

All round the house is the jet-black night;
It stares through the window-pane;
It crawls in the corners, hiding from the light,
And it moves with the moving flame.

Now my little heart goes a-beating like a drum,
With the breath of the Bogie in my hair;
And all round the candle the crooked shadows come
And go marching along up the stair.

The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp,
The shadow of the child that goes to bed—
All the wicked shadows coming, tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead.

3. In Port

Last, to the chamber where I lie
My fearful footsteps patter nigh,
And come from out the cold and gloom
Into my warm and cheerful room.

There, safe arrived, we turn about
To keep the coming shadows out,
And close the happy door at last
On all the perils that we past.

Then, when mamma goes by to bed.
She shall come in with tiptoe tread,
And see me lying warm and fast
And in the Land of Nod at last.

THE CHILD ALONE

I

THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE

When children are playing alone on the green,
In comes the playmate that never was seen.
When children are happy and lonely and good,
The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him and nobody saw,
His is a picture you never could draw,
But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home,
When children are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass,
He sings when you tinkle the musical glass;
Whene'er you are happy and cannot tell why,
The Friend of the Children is sure to be by!

He loves to be little, he hates to be big,
'Tis he that inhabits the caves that you dig;
'Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin
That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win.

'Tis he when at night you go off to your bed,
Bids you go to your sleep and not trouble your head;
For wherever they're lying, in cupboard or shelf,
'Tis he will take care of your playthings himself!

II

MY SHIP AND I

O IT'S I that am the captain of a tidy little ship,
Of a ship that goes a-sailing on the pond;
And my ship it keeps a-turning all around and all about;
But when I'm a little older, I shall find the secret out
How to send my vessel sailing on beyond.

For I mean to grow as little as the dolly at the helm,
And the dolly I intend to come alive;
And with him beside to help me, it's a-sailing I shall go,
It's a-sailing on the water, where the jolly breezes blow
And the vessel goes a divie-divie-dive.

O it's then you'll see me sailing through the rushes and the reeds,
And you'll hear the water singing at the prow;
For beside the dolly sailor I'm to voyage and explore,
To land upon the island where no dolly was before,
And to fire the penny cannon in the bow.

III

MY KINGDOM

Down by a shining water well
I found a very little dell,
No higher than my head.
The heather and the gorse about
In summer bloom were coming out,
Some yellow and some red.

I called the little pool a sea;
The little hills were big to me;
For I am very small.
I made a boat, I made a town,
I searched the caverns up and down,
And named them one and all.

And all about was mine, I said,
The little sparrows overhead,
The little minnows too.
This was the world and I was king;
For me the bees came by to sing,
For me the swallows flew.

I played there were no deeper seas,
Nor any wider plains than these,
Nor other kings than me.
At last I heard my mother call
Out from the house at evenfall,
To call me home to tea.

And I must rise and leave my dell,
And leave my dimpled water well,
And leave my heather blooms.
Alas! and as my home I neared
How very big my nurse appeared,
How great and cool the rooms!

IV

PICTURE BOOKS IN WINTER

Summer fading, winter comes—
Frosty mornings, tingling thumbs,
Window robins, winter rooks,
And the picture story-books.

Water now is turned to stone
Nurse and I can walk upon;
Still we find the flowing brooks
In the picture story-books.

All the pretty things put by,
Wait upon the children's eye,
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are,
Seas and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks,
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books?

V

MY TREASURES

These nuts that I keep in the back of the nest
Where all my lead soldiers are lying at rest,
Were gathered in autumn by nursie and me
In a wood with a well by the side of the sea.

This whistle we made (and how clearly it sounds!)
By the side of a field at the end of the grounds.
Of a branch of a plane, with a knife of my own,
It was nursie who made it, and nursie alone!

The stone, with the white and the yellow and gray,
We discovered I cannot tell *how* far away;
And I carried it back, although weary and cold,
For though father denies it, I'm sure it is gold.

But of all of my treasures the last is the king,
For there's very few children possess such a thing;
And that is a chisel, both handle and blade,
Which a man who was really a carpenter made.

VI

BLOCK CITY

What are you able to build with your blocks?
Castles and palaces, temples and docks.
Rain may keep raining, and others go roam,
But I can be happy and building at home.

Let the sofa be mountains, the carpet be sea,
There I'll establish a city for me:
A kirk and a mill and a palace beside,
And a harbor as well where my vessels may ride,

Great is the palace with pillar and wall,
A sort of a tower on the top of it all,
And steps coming down in an orderly way,
To where my toy vessels lie safe in the bay.

This one is sailing and that one is moored:
Hark to the song of the sailors on board!
And see on the steps of my palace the kings
Coming and going with presents and things!

Now I have done with it, down let it go!
All in a moment the town is laid low.
Block upon block lying scattered and free,
What is there left of my town by the sea?

Yet as I saw it, I see it again,
The kirk and the palace, the ships and the men,
And as long as I live and where'er I may be,
I'll always remember my town by the sea.

VII

THE LAND OF STORY BOOKS

At evening when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit;
They sit at home and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.

Now, with my little gun, I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow round the forest track
Away behind the sofa back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are my starry solitudes;
And there the river by whose brink
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away
As if in firelit camp they lay,
And I, like to an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.

So, when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear land of Story-books.

VIII

ARMIES IN THE FIRE

The lamps now glitter down the street;
Faintly sound the falling feet;
And the blue even slowly falls
About the garden trees and walls.

Now in the falling of the gloom
The red fire paints the empty room:
And warmly on the roof it looks,
And flickers on the backs of books.

Armies march by tower and spire
Of cities blazing, in the fire;—
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,
The armies fade, the luster dies.

Then once again the glow returns;
Again the phantom city burns;
And down the red-hot valley, lo!
The phantom armies marching go!

Blinking embers, tell me true
Where are those armies marching to,
And what the burning city is
That crumbles in your furnaces!

IX

THE LITTLE LAND

When at home alone I sit
And am very tired of it,
I have just to shut my eyes
To go sailing through the skies—
To go sailing far away
To the pleasant Land of Play;
To the fairy land afar
Where the Little People are;
Where the clover-tops are trees,
And the rain-pools are the seas,
And the leaves like little ships
Sail about on tiny trips;
And above the daisy tree
Through the grasses
High o'erhead the Bumble Bee
Hums and passes.

In that forest to and fro
I can wander, I can go;
See the spider and the fly,
And the ants go marching by
Carrying parcels with their feet
Down the green and grassy street.
I can in the sorrel sit
Where the ladybird alit.
I can climb the jointed grass;
And on high
See the greater swallows pass
In the sky,
And the round sun rolling by
Heeding no such things as I.

Through that forest I can pass
Till, as in a looking-glass,
Humming fly and daisy tree
And my tiny self I see,
Painted very clear and neat
On the rain-pool at my feet.
Should a leaflet come to land
Drifting near to where I stand,
Straight I'll board that tiny boat
Round the rain-pool sea to float.

Little thoughtful creatures sit
On the grassy coasts of it;
Little things with lovely eyes
See me sailing with surprise.
Some are clad in armor green—
(These have sure to battle been!)—
Some are pied with every hue,
Black and crimson, gold and blue;
Some have wings and swift are gone;—
But they all look kindly on.

When my eyes I once again
Open, and see all things plain:
High bare walls, great bare floor;
Great big knobs on drawer and door;
Great big people perched on chairs,
Stitching tucks and mending tears,
Each a hill that I could climb,
And talking nonsense all the time—
O dear me,
That I could be
A sailor on the rain-pool sea,
A climber in the clover tree,
And just come back, a sleepy-head,
Late at night to go to bed.

GARDEN DAYS

I

NIGHT AND DAY

When the golden day is done,
Through the closing portal,
Child and garden, flower and sun,
Vanish all things mortal.

As the blinding shadows fall,
As the rays diminish,
Under evening's cloak, they all
Roll away and vanish.

Garden darkened, daisy shut,
Child in bed, they slumber—
Glow-worm in the highway rut,
Mice among the lumber.

In the darkness houses shine,
Parents move with candles;
Till on all the night divine
Turns the bedroom handles.

Till at last the day begins
In the east a-breaking,
In the hedges and the whins
Sleeping birds a-waking.

In the darkness shapes of things,
Houses, trees, and hedges,
Clearer grow: and sparrows' wings
Beat on window ledges.

These shall wake the yawning maid;
  She the door shall open—
Finding dew on garden glade
  And the morning broken.

There my garden grows again
  Green and rosy painted,
As at eve behind the pane
  From my eyes it fainted.

Just as it was shut away,
  Toy-like in the even,
Here I see it glow with day
  Under glowing heaven.

Every path and every plot,
  Every bush of roses,
Every blue forget-me-not
  Where the dew reposes,

"Up!" they cry, "the day is come
  On the smiling valleys:
We have beat the morning drum;
  Playmate, join your allies!"

II

NEST EGGS

Birds all the sunny day
  Flutter and quarrel
Here in the arbor-like
  Tent of the laurel.

Here in the fork
  The brown nest is seated;
Four little blue eggs
  The mother keeps heated.

While we stand watching her,
  Staring like gabies,
Safe in each egg are the
  Bird's little babies.

Soon the frail eggs they shall
  Chip, and upspringing
Make all the April woods
  Merry with singing.

Younger than we are,
  O children, and frailer,
Soon in blue air they'll be,
  Singer and sailor.

We so much older,
  Taller and stronger,
We shall look down on the
  Birdies no longer.

They shall go flying
  With musical speeches
High overhead in the
  Tops of the beeches.

In spite of our wisdom
  And sensible talking,
We on our feet must go
  Plodding and walking.

III

THE FLOWERS

All the names I know from nurse:
Gardener's garters, Shepherd's purse,
Bachelor's buttons, Lady's smock,
And the Lady Hollyhock.

Fairy places, fairy things,
Fairy woods where the wild bee wings,
Tiny trees for tiny dames—
These must all be fairy names!

Tiny woods below whose boughs
Shady fairies weave a house;
Tiny tree-tops, rose or thyme,
Where the braver fairies climb!

Fair are grown-up people's trees,
But the fairest woods are these;
Where if I were not so tall,
I should live for good and all.

IV

SUMMER SUN

Great is the sun, and wide he goes
Through empty heaven without repose;
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlor cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider-clad,
He through the key-hole maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles,
Into the laddered hayloft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the World, he goes.

V

THE DUMB SOLDIER

When the grass was closely mown,
Walking on the lawn alone,
In the turf a hole I found
And hid a soldier underground.

Spring and daisies came apace;
Grasses hide my hiding-place;
Grasses run like a green sea
O'er the lawn up to my knee.

Under grass alone he lies,
Looking up with leaden eyes,
Scarlet coat and pointed gun,
To the stars and to the sun.

When the grass is ripe like grain,
When the scythe is stoned again,
When the lawn is shaven clear,
Then my hole shall reappear.

I shall find him, never fear,
I shall find my grenadier;
But for all that's gone and come,
I shall find my soldier dumb.

He has lived, a little thing,
In the grassy woods of spring;
Done, if he could tell me true
Just as I should like to do.

He has seen the starry hours
And the springing of the flowers;
And the fairy things that pass
In the forests of the grass.

In the silence he has heard
Talking bee and ladybird,
And the butterfly has flown,
O'er him as he lay alone.

Not a word will he disclose,
Not a word of all he knows.
I must lay him on the shelf,
And make up the tale myself.

VI

AUTUMN FIRES

In the other gardens
  And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
  See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over
  And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
  The gray smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
  Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
  Fires in the fall!

VII

THE GARDENER

The gardener does not love to talk,
He makes me keep the gravel walk;
And when he puts his tools away,
He locks the door and takes the key.

Away behind the currant row
Where no one else but cook may go,
Far in the plots, I see him dig,
Old and serious, brown and big.

He digs the flowers, green, red, and blue,
Nor wishes to be spoken to.
He digs the flowers and cuts the hay,
And never seems to want to play.

Silly gardener! summer goes,
And winter comes with pinching toes.
When in the garden bare and brown
You must lay your barrow down.

Well now, and while the summer stays,
To profit by these garden days,
O how much wiser you would be
To play at Indian wars with me!

VIII

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Dear Uncle Jim, this garden ground
That now you smoke your pipe around,
Has seen immortal actions done
And valiant battles lost and won.

Here we had best on tip-toe tread,
While I for safety march ahead,
For this is that enchanted ground
Where all who loiter slumber sound.

Here is the sea, here is the sand,
Here is simple Shepherd's Land,
Here are the fairy hollyhocks,
And there are Ali Baba's rocks.

But yonder, see! apart and high,
Frozen Siberia lies; where I,
With Robert Bruce and William Tell,
Was bound by an enchanter's spell.

There, then, awhile in chains we lay,
In wintry dungeons, far from day;
But ris'n at length, with might and main,
Our iron fetters burst in twain.

Then all the horns were blown in town;
And to the ramparts clanging down,
All the giants leaped to horse
And charged behind us through the gorse.

On we rode, the others and I,
Over the mountains blue, and by
The Silver River, the sounding sea,
And the robber woods of Tartary.

A thousand miles we galloped fast,
And down the witches' lane we passed,
And rode amain, with brandished sword,
Up to the middle, through the ford.

Last we drew rein—a weary three—
Upon the lawn, in time for tea,
And from our steeds alighted down
Before the gates of Babylon.

ENVOYS

I

TO WILLIE AND HENRIETTA

If two may read aright
These rhymes of old delight
And house and garden play,
You two, my cousins, and you only, may.

You in a garden green
With me were king and queen,
Were hunter, soldier, tar,
And all the thousand things that children are.

Now in the elders' seat
We rest with quiet feet,
And from the window-bay
We watch the children, our successors, play.

"Time was," the golden head
Irrevocably said;
But time which none can bind,
While flowing fast away, leaves love behind.

II

TO MY MOTHER

You too, my mother, read my rhymes
For love of unforgotten times,
And you may chance to hear once more
The little feet along the floor.

III

TO AUNTIE

Chief of our aunts—not only I,
But all your dozen of nurslings cry—
What did the other children do?
And what were childhood, wanting you?

IV

TO MINNIE

The red room with the giant bed
Where none but elders laid their head;
The little room where you and I
Did for a while together lie
And, simple suitor, I your hand
In decent marriage did demand;
The great day nursery, best of all,
With pictures pasted on the wall
And leaves upon the blind—
A pleasant room wherein to wake
And hear the leafy garden shake
And rustle in the wind—
And pleasant there to lie in bed
And see the pictures overhead—
The wars about Sebastopol,
The grinning guns along the wall,
The daring escalade,
The plunging ships, the bleating sheep,
The happy children ankle-deep
And laughing as they wade:
All these are vanished clean away,
And the old manse is changed to-day;
It wears an altered face
And shields a stranger race.

The river, on from mill to mill,
Flows past our childhood's garden still;
But ah! we children nevermore
Shall watch it from the water-door!
Below the yew—it still is there—
Our phantom voices haunt the air
As we were still at play,
And I can hear them call and say:
"*How far is it to Babylon?*"

Ah, far enough, my dear,
Far, far enough from here—
Yet you have further gone!
"*Can I get there by candle-light?*"
So goes the old refrain.
I do not know—perchance you might—
But only, children, hear it right,
Ah, never to return again!
The eternal dawn, beyond a doubt,
Shall break on hill and plain,
And put all stars and candles out,
Ere we be young again.

To you in distant India, these
I send across the seas,
Nor count it far across.
For which of us forgets
The Indian cabinets,
The bones of antelope, the wings of albatross,
The pied and painted birds and beans,
The junks and bangles, beads and screens,
The gods and sacred bells,
And the loud-humming, twisted shells?
The level of the parlor floor
Was honest, homely, Scottish shore;
But when we climbed upon a chair,
Behold the gorgeous East was there!

Be this a fable; and behold
Me in the parlor as of old,
And Minnie just above me set
In the quaint Indian cabinet!
Smiling and kind, you grace a shelf
Too high for me to reach myself.
Reach down a hand, my dear, and take
These rhymes for old acquaintance' sake.

V

TO MY NAME-CHILD

1

Some day soon this rhyming volume, if you learn with proper speed,
Little Louis Sanchez, will be given you to read.
Then shall you discover, that your name was printed down
By the English printers, long before, in London town.
In the great and busy city where the East and West are met,
All the little letters did the English printer set;
While you thought of nothing, and were still too young to play,
Foreign people thought of you in places far away.

Ay, and while you slept, a baby, over all the English lands
Other little children took the volume in their hands;
Other children questioned, in their homes across the seas:
Who was little Louis, won't you tell us, mother, please?

2

Now that you have spelt your lesson, lay it down and go and play,
Seeking shells and seaweed on the sands of Monterey,
Watching all the mighty whalebones, lying buried by the breeze,
Tiny sandy-pipers, and the huge Pacific seas.

And remember in your playing, as the sea-fog rolls to you,
Long ere you could read it, how I told you what to do;
And that while you thought of no one, nearly half the world
away
Some one thought of Louis on the beach of Monterey!

VI

TO ANY READER

As from the house your mother sees
You playing round the garden trees,
So you may see, if you will look
Through the windows of this book,
Another child, far, far away,
And in another garden, play.
But do not think you can at all,
By knocking on the window, call
That child to hear you. He intent
Is all on his play-business bent.
He does not hear; he will not look,
Nor yet be lured out of this book.
For, long ago, the truth to say,
He has grown up and gone away,
And it is but a child of air
That lingers in the garden there.

Henry Pfeiffer Library
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BALLADS

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THE SONG OF RAHÉRO

A LEGEND OF TAHITI

TO ORI A ORI

Ori, my brother in the island mode,
In every tongue and meaning much my friend,
This story of your country and your clan,
In your loved house, your too much honoured guest,
I made in English. Take it, being done;
And let me sign it with the name you gave.

TERIITERA.

THE SONG OF RAHÉRO

I. THE SLAYING OF TÁMÁTEA

It fell in the days of old, as the men of Taiárapu tell,
A youth went forth to the fishing, and fortune favoured him well.
Támatéa his name: gullible, simple, and kind,
Comely of countenance, nimble of body, empty of mind,
His mother ruled him and loved him beyond the wont of a wife,
Serving the lad for eyes and living herself in his life.
Alone from the sea and the fishing came Támatéa the fair,
Urging his boat to the beach, and the mother awaited him there,
—"Long may you live!" said she. "Your fishing has sped to a wish.
And now let us choose for the king the fairest of all your fish.
For fear inhabits the palace and grudging grows in the land,
Marked is the sluggardly foot and marked the niggardly hand,
The hours and the miles are counted, the tributes numbered and weighed,
And woe to him that comes short, and woe to him that delayed!"

So spoke on the beach the mother, and counselled the wiser thing.
For Rahéro stirred in the country and secretly mined the king.
Nor were the signals wanting of how the leaven wrought,
In the cords of obedience loosed and the tributes grudgingly brought.

And when last to the temple of Oro the boat with the victim sped,
And the priest uncovered the basket and looked on the face of the dead,
Trembling fell upon all at sight of an ominous thing,
For there was the aito [1] dead, and he of the house of the king.

So spake on the beach the mother, matter worthy of note,
And wattled a basket well, and chose a fish from the boat;
And Támatéa the pliable shouldered the basket and went,
And travelled, and sang as he travelled, a lad that was well content.
Still the way of his going was round by the roaring coast,
Where the ring of the reef is broke and the trades run riot the most.
On his left, with smoke as of battle, the billows battered the land;
Unscalable, turreted mountains rose on the inner hand.
And cape, and village, and river, and vale, and mountain above,
Each had a name in the land for men to remember and love;
And never the name of a place, but lo! a song in its praise:
Ancient and unforgotten, songs of the earlier days,
That the elders taught to the young, and at night, in the full of the moon,
Garlanded boys and maidens sang together in tune.
Támatéa the placable went with a lingering foot;
He sang as loud as a bird, he whistled hoarse as a flute;
He broiled in the sun, he breathed in the grateful shadow of trees,
In the icy stream of the rivers he waded over the knees;
And still in his empty mind crowded, a thousand-fold,
The deeds of the strong and the songs of the cunning heroes of old.
And now was he come to a place Taiárapu honoured the most,

THE SONG OF RAHÉRO

Where a silent valley of woods debouched on the noisy coast,
Spewing a level river. There was a haunt of Pai.[2]
There, in his potent youth, when his parents drove him to die,
Honoura lived like a beast, lacking the lamp and the fire,
Washed by the rains of the trade and clotting his hair in the mire;
And there, so mighty his hands, he bent the tree to his foot—
So keen the spur of his hunger, he plucked it naked of fruit.
There, as she pondered the clouds for the shadow of coming ills,
Ahupu, the woman of song, walked on high on the hills.

Of these was Rahéro sprung, a man of a godly race;
And inherited cunning of spirit and beauty of body and face.
Of yore in his youth, as an aito, Rahéro wandered the land,
Delighting maids with his tongue, smiting men with his hand.
Famous he was in his youth; but before the midst of his life
Paused, and fashioned a song of farewell to glory and strife.

House of mine (it went), house upon the sea
Belov'd of all my fathers, more belov'd by me!
Vale of the strong Honoura, deep ravine of Pai,
Again in your woody summits I hear the trade-wind cry.

House of mine, in your walls, strong sounds the sea,
Of all sounds on earth, dearest sound to me.
I have heard the applause of men, I have heard it arise and die:
Sweeter now in my house I hear the trade-wind cry.

These were the words of his singing, other the thought of his heart;
For secret desire of glory vexed him, dwelling apart.
Lazy and crafty he was, and loved to lie in the sun,
And loved the cackle of talk and the true word uttered in fun;
Lazy, he was, his roof was ragged, his table was lean,

And the fish swam safe in his sea, and he gathered the near and the green.
He sat in his house and laughed, but he loathed the king of the land,
And he uttered the grudging word under the covering hand.
Treason spread from his door; and he looked for a day to come,
A day of the crowding people, a day of the summoning drum,
When the vote should be taken, the king be driven forth in disgrace,
And Rahéro, the laughing and lazy, sit and rule in his place.
Here Támatéa came, and beheld the house on the brook;
And Rahéro was there by the way and covered an oven to cook.[3]
Naked he was to the loins, but the tattoo covered the lack,
And the sun and the shadow of palms dappled his muscular back.
Swiftly he lifted his head at the fall of the coming feet,
And the water sprang in his mouth with a sudden desire of meat;
For he marked the basket carried, covered from flies and the sun;[4]
And Rahéro buried his fire, but the meat in his house was done.

Forth he stepped; and took, and delayed the boy, by the hand;
And vaunted the joys of meat and the ancient ways of the land:
—"Our sires of old in Taiárapu, they that created the race,
Ate ever with eager hand, nor regarded season or place,
Ate in the boat at the oar, on the way afoot; and at night
Arose in the midst of dreams to rummage the house for a bite.
It is good for the youth in his turn to follow the way of the sire;
And behold how fitting the time! for here do I cover my fire."

—"I see the fire for the cooking but never the meat to cook,"
Said Támatéa.—"Tut!" said Rahéro. "Here in the brook
And there in the tumbling sea, the fishes are thick as flies,
Hungry like healthy men, and like pigs for savour and size:
Crayfish crowding the river, sea-fish thronging the sea."
—"Well it may be," says the other, "and yet be nothing to me.
Fain would I eat, but alas! I have needful matter in hand,
Since I carry my tribute of fish to the jealous king of the land."
Now at the word a light sprang into Rahéro's eyes.
"I will gain me a dinner," thought he, "and lend the king a surprise."
And he took the lad by the arm, as they stood by the side of the track,
And smiled, and rallied, and flattered, and pushed him forward and back.
It was "You that sing like a bird, I never have heard you sing,"
And "The lads when I was a lad were none so feared of a king.
And of what account is an hour, when the heart is empty of guile?
But come, and sit in the house and laugh with the women awhile;
And I will but drop my hook, and behold! the dinner made."

So Támatéa the pliable hung up his fish in the shade
On a tree by the side of the way; and Rahéro carried him in,
Smiling as smiles the fowler when flutters the bird to the gin,
And chose him a shining hook,[5] and viewed it with sedulous eye,
And breathed and burnished it well on the brawn of his naked thigh,
And set a mat for the gull, and made him be merry and bide,
Like a man concerned for his guest, and the fishing, and nothing beside.

Now when Rahéro was forth, he paused and hearkened, and heard
The gull jest in the house and the women laugh at his word;
And stealthily crossed to the side of the way, to the shady place
Where the basket hung on a mango; and craft transfigured his face.
Deftly he opened the basket, and took of the fat of the fish,
The cut of kings and chieftains, enough for a goodly dish.
This he wrapped in a leaf, set on the fire to cook
And buried: and next the marred remains of the tribute he took,
And doubled and packed them well, and covered the basket close
—"There is a buffet, my king," quoth he, "and a nauseous dose!"—
And hung the basket again in the shade, in a cloud of flies,
—"And there is a sauce to your dinner, king of the crafty eyes!"

Soon as the oven was open, the fish smelt excellent good.
In the shade, by the house of Rahéro, down they sat to their food,
And cleared the leaves [6] in silence, or uttered a jest and laughed,
And raising the cocoanut bowls, buried their faces and quaffed.
But chiefly in silence they ate; and soon as the meal was done,
Rahéro feigned to remember and measured the hour by the sun,
And "Támatéa," quoth he, "it is time to be jogging, my lad."

So Támatéa arose, doing ever the thing he was bade,
And carelessly shouldered the basket, and kindly saluted his host;

And again the way of his going was round by the roaring coast.
Long he went; and at length was aware of a pleasant green,
And the stems and shadows of palms, and roofs of lodges between
There sate, in the door of his palace, the king on a kingly seat.
And aitos stood armed around, and the yottowas[7] sat at his feet.
But fear was a worm in his heart: fear darted his eyes;
And he probed men's faces for treasons and pondered their speech for lies.
To him came Támatéa, the basket slung in his hand,
And paid him the due obeisance standing as vassals stand.
In silence hearkened the king, and closed the eyes in his face,
Harbouring odious thoughts and the baseless fears of the base;
In silence accepted the gift and sent the giver away.
So Támatéa departed, turning his back on the day.

And lo! as the king sat brooding, a rumour rose in the crowd;
The yottowas nudged and whispered, the commons murmured aloud;
Tittering fell upon all at sight of the impudent thing,
At the sight of a gift unroyal flung in the face of a king.
And the face of the king turned white and red with anger and shame
In their midst; and the heart in his body was water and then was flame;
Till of a sudden, turning, he gripped an aito hard,
A youth that stood with his ómare,[8] one of the daily guard,
And spat in his ear a command, and pointed and uttered a name,
And hid in the shade of the house his impotent anger and shame.

Now Támatéa the fool was far on the homeward way,
The rising night in his face, behind him the dying day.
Rahéro saw him go by, and the heart of Rahéro was glad,
Devising shame to the king and nowise harm to the lad;
And all that dwelt by the way saw and saluted him well,
For he had the face of a friend and the news of the town to tell;
And pleased with the notice of folk, and pleased that his journey was done,
Támatéa drew homeward, turning his back to the sun.

And now was the hour of the bath in Taiárapu: far and near
The lovely laughter of bathers rose and delighted his ear.
Night massed in the valleys; the sun on the mountain coast
Struck, end-long; and above the clouds embattled their host,
And glowed and gloomed on the heights; and the heads of the palms were gems,
And far to the rising eve extended the shade of their stems;
And the shadow of Támatéa hovered already at home.

And sudden the sound of one coming and running light as the foam
Struck on his ear; and he turned, and lo! a man on his track,
Girded and armed with an ómare, following hard at his back.
At a bound the man was upon him;—and, or ever a word was said,
The loaded end of the ómare fell and laid him dead.

II. THE VENGING OF TÁMATÉA

Thus was Rahéro's treason; thus and no further it sped;
The king sat safe in his palace and a kindly fool was dead.

But the mother of Támatéa arose with death in her eyes.
All night long, and the next, Taiárapu rang with her cries.
As when a babe in the wood turns with a chill of doubt
And perceives nor home, nor friends, for the trees have closed her about,
The mountain rings and her breast is torn with the voice of despair:
So the lion-like woman idly wearied the air
For awhile, and pierced men's hearing in vain, and wounded their hearts.
But as when the weather changes at sea, in dangerous parts,
And sudden the hurricane wrack unrolls up the front of the sky,
At once the ship lies idle, the sails hang silent on high,
The breath of the wind that blew is blown out like the flame of a lamp,
And the silent armies of death draw near with inaudible tramp:
So sudden, the voice of her weeping ceased; in silence she rose
And passed from the house of her sorrow, a woman clothed with repose,
Carrying death in her breast and sharpening death with her hand.

Hither she went and thither in all the coasts of the land.
They tell that she feared not to slumber alone, in the dead of night,
In accursed places; beheld, unblenched, the ribbon of light[9]

Spin from temple to temple; guided the perilous skiff,
Abhorred not the paths of the mountain and trod the verge of the cliff;
From end to end of the island, though not the distance long,
But forth from king to king carried the tale of her wrong.
To king after king, as they sat in the palace door, she came,
Claiming kinship, declaiming verses, naming her name
And the names of all of her fathers; and still, with a heart on the rack,
Jested to capture a hearing and laughed when they jested back:
So would deceive them awhile, and change and return in a breath,
And on all the men of Vaiau imprecate instant death;
And tempt her kings—for Vaiau was a rich and prosperous land,
And flatter—for who would attempt it but warriors mighty of hand?
And change in a breath again and rise in a strain of song,
Invoking the beaten drums, beholding the fall of the strong,
Calling the fowls of the air to come and feast on the dead.
And they held the chin in silence, and heard her, and shook the head;
For they knew the men of Taiárapu famous in battle and feast,
Marvellous eaters and smiters: the men of Vaiau not least.

To the land of the Námunu-úra,[10] to Paea, at length she came,
To men who were foes to the Tevas and hated their race and name.
There was she well received, and spoke with Hiopa the king.[11]
And Hiopa listened, and weighed, and wisely considered the thing.
"Here in the back of the isle we dwell in a sheltered place,"
Quoth he to the woman, "in quiet, a weak and peaceable race.
But far in the teeth of the wind lofty Taiárapu lies;

Strong blows the wind of the trade on its seaward face, and cries
Aloud in the top of arduous mountains, and utters its song
In green continuous forests. Strong is the wind, and strong
And fruitful and hardy the race, famous in battle and feast,
Marvellous eaters and smiters: the men of Vaiau not least.
Now hearken to me, my daughter, and hear a word of the wise:
How a strength goes linked with a weakness, two by two, like the eyes.
They can wield the ómare well and cast the javelin far;
Yet are they greedy and weak as the swine and the children are.
Plant we, then, here at Paea, a garden of excellent fruits;
Plant we bananas and kava and taro, the king of roots;
Let the pigs in Paea be tapu [12] and no man fish for a year;
And of all the meat in Tahiti gather we threefold here.
So shall the fame of our plenty fill the island, and so,
At last, on the tongue of rumour, go where we wish it to go.
Then shall the pigs of Taiárapu raise their snouts in the air;
But we sit quiet and wait, as the fowler sits by the snare,
And tranquilly fold our hands, till the pigs come nosing the food:
But meanwhile build us a house of Trotéa, the stubborn wood,
Bind it with incombustible thongs, set a roof to the room,
Too strong for the hands of a man to dissever or fire to consume;
And there, when the pigs come trotting, there shall the feast be spread,
There shall the eye of the morn enlighten the feasters dead.
So be it done; for I have a heart that pities your state,
And Nateva and Námunu-úra are fire and water for hate."

All was done as he said, and the gardens prospered; and now
The fame of their plenty went out, and word of it came to Vaiau.
For the men of Námunu-úra sailed, to the windward far,
Lay in the offing by south where the towns of the Tevas are,

And cast overboard of their plenty; and lo! at the Tevas' feet
The surf on all of the beaches tumbled treasures of meat.
In the salt of the sea, a harvest tossed with the refluent foam;
And the children gleaned it in playing, and ate and carried it home;
And the elders stared and debated, and wondered and passed the jest,
But whenever a guest came by eagerly questioned the guest;
And little by little, from one to another, the word went round:
"In all the borders of Paea the victual rots on the ground,
And swine are plenty as rats. And now, when they fare to the sea,
The men of the Námunu-úra glean from under the tree
And load the canoe to the gunwale with all that is toothsome to eat;
And all day long on the sea the jaws are crushing the meat,
The steersman eats at the helm, the rowers munch at the oar,
And at length, when their bellies are full, overboard with the store!"
Now was the word made true, and soon as the bait was bare,
All the pigs of Taiárapu raised their snouts in the air.
Songs were recited, and kinship was counted, and tales were told
How war had severed of late but peace had cemented of old
The clans of the island. "To war," said they, "now set we an end,
And hie to the Námunu-úra even as a friend to a friend."

So judged, and a day was named; and soon as the morning broke,
Canoes were thrust in the sea and the houses emptied of folk.
Strong blew the wind of the south, the wind that gathers the clan;
Along all the line of the reef the clamorous surges ran;
And the clouds were piled on the top of the island mountain-high,

A mountain throned on a mountain. The fleet of canoes swept by
In the midst, on the green lagoon, with a crew released from care,
Sailing an even water, breathing a summer air,
Cheered by a cloudless sun; and ever to left and right,
Bursting surge on the reef, drenching storms on the height.
So the folk of Vaiau sailed and were glad all day,
Coasting the palm-tree cape and crossing the populous bay
By all the towns of the Tevas; and still as they bowled along,
Boat would answer to boat with jest and laughter and song,
And the people of all the towns trooped to the sides of the sea
And gazed from under the hand or sprang aloft on the tree,
Hailing and cheering. Time failed them for more to do;
The holiday village careened to the wind, and was gone from view
Swift as a passing bird; and ever as onward it bore,
Like the cry of the passing bird, bequeathed its song to the shore—
Desirable laughter of maids and the cry of delight of the child.
And the gazer, left behind, stared at the wake and smiled.
By all the towns of the Tevas they went, and Pápara last,
The home of the chief, the place of muster in war; and passed
The march of the lands of the clan, to the lands of an alien folk.
And there, from the dusk of the shoreside palms, a column of smoke
Mounted and wavered and died in the gold of the setting sun,
"Paea!" they cried. "It is Paea." And so was the voyage done.

In the early fall of the night, Hïopa came to the shore,
And beheld and counted the comers, and lo, there were forty score:
The pelting feet of the babes that ran already and played,

The clean-lipped smile of the boy, the slender breasts of the maid,
And the mighty limbs of women, stalwart mothers of men.
The sires stood forth unabashed; but a little back from his ken
Clustered the scarcely nubile, the lads and maids, in a ring,
Fain of each other, afraid of themselves, aware of the king
And aping behaviour, but clinging together with hands and eyes,
With looks that were kind like kisses, and laughter tender as sighs.
There, too, the grandsire stood, raising his silver crest,
And the impotent hands of a suckling groped in his barren breast.
The childhood of love, the pair well married, the innocent brood,
The tale of the generations repeated and ever renewed—
Hiopa beheld them together, all the ages of man,
And a moment shook in his purpose.

But these were the foes of his clan,
And he trod upon pity, and came, and civilly greeted the king,
And gravely entreated Rahéro; and for all that could fight or sing,
And claimed a name in the land, had fitting phrases of praise;
But with all who were well-descended he spoke of the ancient days.
And "'Tis true," said he, "that in Paea the victual rots on the ground;
But, friends, your number is many; and pigs must be hunted and found,
And the lads troop to the mountains to bring the féis down,
And around the bowls of the kava cluster the maids of the town.
So, for to-night, sleep here; but king, common, and priest
To-morrow, in order due, shall sit with me in the feast."

Sleepless the live-long night, Hiopa's followers toiled.
The pigs screamed and were slaughtered; the spars of the guest-house oiled,
The leaves spread on the floor. In many a mountain glen
The moon drew shadows of trees on the naked bodies of men
Plucking and bearing fruits; and in all the bounds of the town
Red glowed the cocoanut fires and were buried and trodden down.
Thus did seven of the yottowas toil with their tale of the clan,
But the eighth wrought with his lads, hid from the sight of man.
In the deeps of the woods they laboured, piling the fuel high
In fagots, the load of a man, fuel seasoned and dry,
Thirsty to seize upon fire and apt to blurt into flame.

And now was the day of the feast. The forests, as morning came,
Tossed in the wind, and the peaks quaked in the blaze of the day
And the cocoanuts showered on the ground, rebounding and rolling away:
A glorious morn for a feast, a famous wind for a fire.
To the hall of feasting Hiopa led them, mother and sire
And maid and babe in a tale, the whole of the holiday throng.
Smiling they came, garlanded green, not dreaming of wrong;
And for every three, a pig tenderly cooked in the ground,
Waited; and féi, the staff of life, heaped in a mound
For each where he sat;—for each, bananas roasted and raw
Piled with a bountiful hand, as for horses hay and straw
Are stacked in a stable; and fish, the food of desire,[13]
And plentiful vessels of sauce, and breadfruit gilt in the fire;—
And kava was common as water. Feasts have there been ere now,
And many, but never a feast like that of the folk of Vaiau.
All day long they ate with the resolute greed of brutes,

And turned from the pigs to the fish, and again from the fish to the fruits,
And emptied the vessels of sauce, and drank of the kava deep;
Till the young lay stupid as stones, and the strongest nodded to sleep.
Sleep that was mighty as death and blind as a moonless night
Tethered them hand and foot; and their souls were drowned, and the light
Was cloaked from their eyes. Senseless together, the old and the young,
The fighter deadly to smite and the prater cunning of tongue,
The woman wedded and fruitful, inured to the pangs of birth,
And the maid that knew not of kisses, blindly sprawled on the earth.
From the hall Hiopa the king and his chiefs came stealthily forth.
Already the sun hung low and enlightened the peaks of the north;
But the wind was stubborn to die and blew as it blows at morn,
Showering the nuts in the dusk, and e'en as a banner is torn,
High on the peaks of the island, shattered the mountain cloud.
And now at once, at a signal, a silent, emulous crowd
Set hands to the work of death, hurrying to and fro,
Like ants, to furnish the fagots, building them broad and low,
And piling them high and higher around the walls of the hall.
Silence persisted within, for sleep lay heavy on all;
But the mother of Támatéa stood at Hiopa's side,
And shook for terror and joy like a girl that is a bride.
Night fell on the toilers, and first Hiopa the wise
Made the round of the house, visiting all with his eyes;
And all was piled to the eaves, and fuel blockaded the door;

And within, in the house beleaguered, slumbered the forty score.
Then was an aito dispatched and came with fire in his hand,
And Hiopa took it.—"Within," said he, "is the life of a land;
And behold! I breathe on the coal, I breathe on the dales of the east,
And silence falls on forest and shore; the voice of the feast
Is quenched, and the smoke of cooking; the rooftree decays and falls
On the empty lodge, and the winds subvert deserted walls."

Therewithal, to the fuel, he laid the glowing coal;
And the redness ran in the mass and burrowed within like a mole,
And copious smoke was conceived. But, as when a dam is to burst,
The water lips it and crosses in silver trickles at first,
And then, of a sudden, whelms and bears it away forthright:
So now, in a moment, the flames sprang and towered in the night,
And wrestled and roared in the wind, and high over house and tree,
Stood, like a streaming torch, enlightening land and sea.

But the mother of Támatéa threw her arms abroad,
"Pyre of my son," she shouted, "debited vengeance of God,
Late, late, I behold you, yet I behold you at last,
And glory, beholding! For now are the days of my agony past,
The lust that famished my soul now eats and drinks its desire,
And they that encompassed my son shrivel alive in the fire.
Tenfold precious the vengeance that comes after lingering years!
Ye quenched the voice of my singer?—hark, in your dying ears,
The song of the conflagration! Ye left me a widow alone?
—Behold, the whole of your race consumes, sinew and bone

And torturing flesh together: man, mother, and maid
Heaped in a common shambles; and already, borne by the trade,
The smoke of your dissolution darkens the stars of night."

Thus she spoke, and her stature grew in the people's sight.

III. RAHÉRO

Rahéro was there in the hall asleep: beside him his wife,
Comely, a mirthful woman, one that delighted in life;
And a girl that was ripe for marriage, shy and sly as a mouse;
And a boy, a climber of trees; all the hopes of his house.
Unwary, with open hands, he slept in the midst of his folk,
And dreamed that he heard a voice crying without, and awoke,
Leaping blindly afoot like one from a dream that he fears.
A hellish glow and clouds were about him;—it roared in his ears
Like the sound of the cataract fall that plunges sudden and steep;
And Rahéro swayed as he stood, and his reason was still asleep.
Now the flame struck hard on the house, wind-wielded, a fracturing blow,
And the end of the roof was burst and fell on the sleepers below;
And the lofty hall, and the feast, and the prostrate bodies of folk,
Shone red in his eyes a moment, and then were swallowed of smoke.
In the mind of Rahéro clearness came; and he opened his throat;
And as when a squall comes sudden, the straining sail of a boat
Thunders aloud and bursts, so thundered the voice of the man.
—"The wind and the rain!" he shouted, the mustering word of the clan,[14]

And "up!" and "to arms, men of Vaiau!" But silence replied,
Or only the voice of the gusts of the fire, and nothing beside.

Rahéro stooped and groped. He handled his womankind,
But the fumes of the fire and the kava had quenched the life of their mind,
And they lay like pillars prone; and his hand encountered the boy,
And there sprang in the gloom of his soul a sudden lightning of joy.
"Him can I save!" he thought, "if I were speedy enough."
And he loosened the cloth from his loins, and swaddled the child in the stuff;
And about the strength of his neck he knotted the burden well.

There where the roof had fallen, it roared like the mouth of hell.
Thither Rahéro went, stumbling on senseless folk,
And grappled a post of the house, and began to climb in the smoke:
The last alive of Vaiau; and the son borne by the sire.
The post glowed in the grain with ulcers of eating fire,
And the fire bit to the blood and mangled his hands and thighs;
And the fumes sang in his head like wine and stung in his eyes;
And still he climbed, and came to the top, the place of proof,
And thrust a hand through the flame, and clambered alive on the roof.
But even as he did so, the wind, in a garment of flames and pain,
Wrapped him from head to heel; and the waistcloth parted in twain;
And the living fruit of his loins dropped in the fire below.

About the blazing feast-house clustered the eyes of the foe,
Watching, hand upon weapon, lest ever a soul should flee,
Shading the brow from the glare, straining the neck to see.
Only, to leeward, the flames in the wind swept far and wide,
And the forest sputtered on fire; and there might no man abide.
Thither Rahéro crept, and dropped from the burning eaves,
And crouching low to the ground, in a treble covert of leaves
And fire and volleying smoke, ran for the life of his soul
Unseen; and behind him under a furnace of ardent coal,
Cairned with a wonder of flame, and blotting the night with smoke,
Blazed and were smelted together the bones of all his folk.

He fled unguided at first; but hearing the breakers roar,
Thitherward shaped his way, and came at length to the shore.
Sound-limbed he was: dry-eyed; but smarted in every part;
And the mighty cage of his ribs heaved on his straining heart
With sorrow and rage. And "Fools!" he cried, "fools of Vaiau,
Heads of swine—gluttons—Alas! and where are they now?
Those that I played with, those that nursed me, those that I nursed?
God, and I outliving them! I, the least and the worst—
I, that thought myself crafty, snared by this herd of swine,
In the tortures of hell and desolate, stripped of all that was mine:
All!—my friends and my fathers—the silver heads of yore
That trooped to the council, the children that ran to the open door
Crying with innocent voices and clasping a father's knees!
And mine, my wife—my daughter—my sturdy climber of trees,
Ah, never to climb again!"

Thus in the dusk of the night,
(For clouds rolled in the sky and the moon was swallowed from sight,)

Pacing and gnawing his fists, Rahéro raged by the shore.
Vengeance: that must be his. But much was to do before;
And first a single life to be snatched from a deadly place,
A life, the root of revenge, surviving plant of the race:
And next the race to be raised anew, and the lands of the clan
Repeopled. So Rahéro designed, a prudent man
Even in wrath, and turned for the means of revenge and escape:
A boat to be seized by stealth, a wife to be taken by rape.

Still was the dark lagoon; beyond on the coral wall,
He saw the breakers shine, he heard them bellow and fall.
Alone, on the top of the reef, a man with a flaming brand
Walked, gazing and pausing, a fish-spear poised in his hand.
The foam boiled to his calf when the mightier breakers came,
And the torch shed in the wind scattering tufts of flame.
Afar on the dark lagoon a canoe lay idly at wait:
A figure dimly guiding it: surely the fisherman's mate.
Rahéro saw and smiled. He straightened his mighty thews:
Naked, with never a weapon, and covered with scorch and bruise,
He straightened his arms, he filled the void of his body with breath,
And, strong as the wind in his manhood, doomed the fisher to death.

Silent he entered the water, and silently swam, and came
There where the fisher walked, holding on high the flame.
Loud on the pier of the reef volleyed the breach of the sea;
And hard at the back of the man, Rahéro crept to his knee
On the coral, and suddenly sprang and seized him, the elder hand
Clutching the joint of his throat, the other snatching the brand
Ere it had time to fall, and holding it steady and high.
Strong was the fisher, brave and swift of mind and of eye—

Strongly he threw in the clutch; but Rahéro resisted the strain,
And jerked, and the spine of life snapped with a crack in twain,
And the man came slack in his hands and tumbled a lump at his feet.

One moment: and there, on the reef, where the breakers whitened and beat,
Rahéro was standing alone, glowing and scorched and bare,
A victor unknown of any, raising the torch in the air.
But once he drank of his breath, and instantly set him to fish
Like a man intent upon supper at home and a savoury dish.
For what should the woman have seen? A man with a torch —and then
A moment's blur of the eyes—and a man with a torch again.
And the torch had scarcely been shaken. "Ah, surely," Rahéro said,
"She will deem it a trick of the eyes, a fancy born in the head;
But time must be given the fool to nourish a fool's belief."
So for a while, a sedulous fisher, he walked the reef,
Pausing at times and gazing, striking at times with the spear:
—Lastly, uttered the call; and even as the boat drew near,
Like a man that was done with its use, tossed the torch in the sea.

Lightly he leaped on the boat beside the woman; and she
Lightly addressed him, and yielded the paddle and place to sit;
For now the torch was extinguished the night was black as the pit.
Rahéro set him to row, never a word he spoke,
And the boat sang in the water urged by his vigorous stroke.
—"What ails you?" the woman asked, "and why did you drop the brand?

We have only to kindle another as soon as we come to land."
Never a word Rahéro replied, but urged the canoe.
And a chill fell on the woman.—"Atta! speak! is it you?
Speak! Why are you silent? Why do you bend aside?
Wherefore steer to the seaward?" thus she panted and cried.
Never a word from the oarsman, toiling there in the dark;
But right for a gate of the reef he silently headed the bark,
And wielding the single paddle with passionate sweep on sweep,
Drove her, the little fitted, forth on the open deep.
And fear, there where she sat, froze the woman to stone:
Not fear of the crazy boat and the weltering deep alone;
But a keener fear of the night, the dark, and the ghostly hour,
And the thing that drove the canoe with more than a mortal's power
And more than a mortal's boldness. For much she knew of the dead
That haunt and fish upon reefs, toiling, like men, for bread,
And traffic with human fishers, or slay them and take their ware,
Till the hour when the star of the dead [15] goes down, and the morning air
Blows, and the cocks are singing on shore. And surely she knew.
The speechless thing at her side belonged to the grave.[16]

It blew
All night from the south; all night, Rahéro contended and kept
The prow to the cresting sea; and, silent, as though she slept,
The woman huddled and quaked. And now was the peek of day.
High and long on their left the mountainous island lay;
And over the peaks of Taiárapu arrows of sunlight struck.
On shore the birds were beginning to sing: the ghostly ruck

Of the buried had long ago returned to the covered grave;
And here on the sea, the woman, waxing suddenly brave,
Turned her swiftly about and looked in the face of the man.
And sure he was none that she knew, none of her country
or clan:
A stranger, mother-naked, and marred with the marks of
fire,
But comely and great of stature, a man to obey and admire.

And Rahéro regarded her also, fixed, with a frowning face,
Judging the woman's fitness to mother a warlike race.
Broad of shoulder, ample of girdle, long in the thigh,
Deep of bosom she was, and bravely supported his eye.

"Woman," said he, "last night the men of your folk—
Man, woman, and maid, smothered my race in smoke.
It was done like cowards: and I, a mighty man of my hands,
Escaped, a single life; and now to the empty lands
And smokeless hearths of my people, sail, with yourself,
alone.
Before your mother was born, the die of to-day was thrown
And you selected:—your husband, vainly striving, to fall
Broken between these hands:—yourself to be severed from
all,
The places, the people, you love—home, kindred, and clan—
And to dwell in a desert and bear the babes of a kinless man."

NOTES TO THE SONG OF RAHÉRO

Introduction.—This tale, of which I have not consciously changed a single feature, I received from tradition. It is highly popular through all the country of the eight Tevas, the clan to which Rahéro belonged; and particularly in Taiárapu, the windward peninsula of Tahiti, where he lived. I have heard from end to end two versions; and as many as five different persons have helped me with details. There seems no reason why the tale should not be true.

Note 1, page 146. *"The aito," quasi* champion, or brave. One skilled in the use of some weapon, who wandered the country challenging distinguished rivals and taking part in local quarrels. It was in the natural course of his advancement to be at last employed by a chief, or king; and it would then be a part of his duties to purvey the victim for sacrifice. One of the doomed families was indicated; the aito took his weapon and went forth alone; a little behind him bearers followed with the sacrificial basket. Sometimes the victim showed fight, sometimes prevailed; more often, without doubt, he fell. But whatever body was found, the bearers indifferently took up.

Note 2, page 147. *"Pai," "Honoura,"* and *"Ahupu."* Legendary persons of Tahiti, all natives of Taiárapu. Of the first two, I have collected singular although imperfect legends, which I hope soon to lay before the public in another place. Of Ahupu, except in snatches of song, little memory appears to linger. She dwelt at least about Tepari,—"the sea-cliffs,"—the eastern fastness of the isle; walked by paths known only to herself upon the mountains; was courted by dangerous suitors who came swimming from adjacent islands, and defended and rescued (as I gather) by the loyalty of native fish. My anxiety to learn more of "Ahupu Vehine" became (during my stay in Taiárapu) a cause of some diversion to that mirthful people, the inhabitants.

Note 3, page 148. *"Covered an oven."* The cooking fire is made in a hole in the ground, and is then buried.

Note 4, page 148. *"Flies."* This is perhaps an anachronism. Even speaking of to-day in Tahiti, the phrase would have to be understood as referring mainly to mosquitoes, and these only in watered valleys with close woods, such as I suppose to form the surroundings of Rahéro's homestead. Quarter of a mile away, where the air moves freely, you shall look in vain for one.

Note 5, page 149. *"Hook"* of mother-of-pearl. Bright-hook fishing, and that with the spear, appear to be the favourite native methods.

Note 6, page 150. *"Leaves,"* the plates of Tahiti.

Note 7, page 151. *"Yottowas,"* so spelt for convenience of pronunciation, *quasi* Tacksmen in the Scottish Highlands. The organisation of eight subdistricts and eight yottowas to a division, which was in use (until yesterday) among the Tevas, I have attributed without authority to the next clan: see page 33.

Note 8, page 151. *"Omare,"* pronounce as a dactyl. A loaded quarter-staff, one of the two favourite weapons of the Tahitian brave; the javelin, or casting spear, was the other.

Note 9, page 153. *"The ribbon of light."* Still to be seen (and heard) spinning from one marae to another on Tahiti; or so I have it upon evidence that would rejoice the Psychical Society.

Note 10, page 154. *"Námunu-úra."* The complete name is Namunuura te aropa. Why it should be pronounced Námunu, dactyllically, I cannot see, but so I have always heard it. This was the clan immediately beyond the Tevas on the south coast of the island. At the date of the tale the clan organisation must have been very weak. There is no particular mention of Támatéa's mother going to Papara, to the head chief of her own clan, which would appear her natural recourse. On the other hand, she seems to have visited various lesser chiefs among the Tevas, and these to have excused themselves solely on the danger of the enterprise. The broad distinction here drawn between Nateva and Námunu-úra is therefore not impossibly anachronistic.

Note 11, page 154. *"Hiopa the king."* Hiopa was really the name of the king (chief) of Vaiau; but I could never learn that of the king of Paea—pronounce to rhyme with the Indian *ayah*—and I gave the name where it was most needed. This note must appear otiose indeed to readers who have never heard of either of these two gentlemen; and perhaps there is only one person in the world capable at once of reading my verses and spying the inaccuracy. For him, for Mr. Tati Salmon, hereditary high chief of the Tevas, the note is solely written: a small attention from a clansman to his chief.

Note 12, page 155. *"Let the pigs be tapu."* It is impossible to explain *tapu* in a note; we have it as an English word, taboo. Suffice it, that a thing which was *tapu* must not be touched, nor a place that was *tapu* visited.

Note 13, page 159. *"Fish, the food of desire."* There is a special word in the Tahitian language to signify *hungering after fish.* I may remark that here is one of my chief difficulties about the whole story. How did king, commons, women, and all come to eat together at this feast? But it troubled none of my numerous authorities; so there must certainly be some natural explanation.

Note 14, page 163. *"The mustering word of the clan."*

Teva te ua,
Teva te matai!

Teva the wind,
Teva the rain!

Notes 15, and 16, page 168. *"The star of the dead."* Venus as a morning star. I have collected much curious evidence as to this belief. The dead retain their taste for a fish diet, enter into copartnery with living fishers, and haunt the reef and the lagoon. The conclusion attributed to the nameless lady of the legend would be reached to-day, under the like circumstances, by ninety per cent of Polynesians: and here I probably understate by one-tenth.

THE FEAST OF FAMINE

MARQUESAN MANNERS

THE FEAST OF FAMINE

I. THE PRIEST'S VIGIL

In all the land of the tribe was neither fish nor fruit,
And the deepest pit of popoi stood empty to the foot.[1]
The clans upon the left and the clans upon the right
Now oiled their carven maces and scoured their daggers bright;
They gat them to the thicket, to the deepest of the shade,
And lay with sleepless eyes in the deadly ambuscade.
And oft in the starry even the song of morning rose,
What time the oven smoked in the country of their foes;
For oft to loving hearts, and waiting ears and sight,
The lads that went to forage returned not with the night.
Now first the children sickened, and then the women paled,
And the great arms of the warrior no more for war availed.
Hushed was the deep drum, discarded was the dance;
And those that met the priest now glanced at him askance.
The priest was a man of years, his eyes were ruby-red,[2]
He neither feared the dark nor the terrors of the dead,
He knew the songs of races, the names of ancient date;
And the beard upon his bosom would have bought the chief's estate.
He dwelt in a high-built lodge, hard by the roaring shore,
Raised on a noble terrace and with tikis [3] at the door.
Within it was full of riches, for he served his nation well,
And full of the sound of breakers, like the hollow of a shell.
For weeks he let them perish, gave never a helping sign,
But sat on his oiled platform to commune with the divine,
But sat on his high terrace, with the tikis by his side,
And stared on the blue ocean, like a parrot, ruby-eyed.
Dawn as yellow as sulphur leaped on the mountain height;
Out on the round of the sea the gems of the morning light,

Up from the round of the sea the streamers of the sun;—
But down in the depths of the valley the day was not begun.
In the blue of the woody twilight burned red the cocoahusk,
And the women and men of the clan went forth to bathe in the dusk,
A word that began to go round, a word, a whisper, a start:
Hope that leaped in the bosom, fear that knocked on the heart:
"See, the priest is not risen—look, for his door is fast!
He is going to name the victims; he is going to help us at last."

Thrice rose the sun to noon; and ever, like one of the dead,
The priest lay still in his house with the roar of the sea in his head;
There was never a foot on the floor, there was never a whisper of speech;
Only the leering tikis stared on the blinding beach.
Again were the mountains fired, again the morning broke;
And all the houses lay still, but the house of the priest awoke.
Close in their covering roofs lay and trembled the clan,
But the agèd, red-eyed priest ran forth like a lunatic man;
And the village panted to see him in the jewels of death again,
In the silver beards of the old and the hair of women slain.
Frenzy shook in his limbs, frenzy shone in his eyes,
And still and again as he ran, the valley rang with his cries.
All day long in the land, by cliff and thicket and den,
He ran his lunatic rounds, and howled for the flesh of men;
All day long he ate not, nor ever drank of the brook;
And all day long in their houses the people listened and shook—
All day long in their houses they listened with bated breath,
And never a soul went forth, for the sight of the priest was death.

Three were the days of his running, as the gods appointed of yore,

THE FEAST OF FAMINE

Two the nights of his sleeping alone in the place of gore:
The drunken slumber of frenzy twice he drank to the lees,
On the sacred stones of the High-place under the sacred trees;
With a lamp at his ashen head he lay in the place of the feast,
And the sacred leaves of the banyan rustled around the priest.
Last, when the stated even fell upon terrace and tree,
And the shade of the lofty island lay leagues away to sea,
And all the valleys of verdure were heavy with manna and musk,
The wreck of the red-eyed priest came gasping home in the dusk.
He reeled across the village, he staggered along the shore,
And between the leering tikis crept groping through his door.

There went a stir through the lodges, the voice of speech awoke;
Once more from the builded platforms arose the evening smoke.
And those who were mighty in war, and those renowned for an art
Sat in their stated seats and talked of the morrow apart.

II. THE LOVERS

Hark! away in the woods—for the ears of love are sharp—
Stealthily, quietly touched, the note of the one-stringed harp.[4]
In the lighted house of her father, why should Taheia start?
Taheia heavy of hair, Taheia tender of heart,
Taheia the well-descended, a bountiful dealer in love,
Nimble of foot like the deer, and kind of eye like the dove?
Sly and shy as a cat, with never a change of face,
Taheia slips to the door, like one that would breathe a space;
Saunters and pauses, and looks at the stars, and lists to the seas;
Then sudden and swift as a cat, she plunges under the trees.
Swift as a cat she runs, with her garment gathered high,
Leaping, nimble of foot, running, certain of eye;
And ever to guide her way over the smooth and the sharp,
Ever nearer and nearer the note of the one-stringed harp;
Till at length, in a glade of the wood, with a naked mountain above,
The sound of the harp thrown down, and she in the arms of her love.
"Rua,"—"Taheia," they cry—"my heart, my soul, and my eyes,"
And clasp and sunder and kiss, with lovely laughter and sighs,
"Rua!"—"Taheia, my love,"—"Rua, star of my night,
Clasp me, hold me, and love me, single spring of delight."

And Rua folded her close, he folded her near and long,
The living knit to the living, and sang the lover's song:

Night, night it is, night upon the palms.
Night, night it is, the land wind has blown.
Starry, starry night, over deep and height;
Love, love in the valley, love all alone.

"Taheia, heavy of hair, a foolish thing have we done,
To bind what gods have sundered unkindly into one.
Why should a lowly lover have touched Taheia's skirt,
Taheia the well-descended, and Rua child of the dirt?"

"—On high with the haka-ikis my father sits in state,
Ten times fifty kinsmen salute him in the gate;
Round all his martial body, and in bands across his face,
The marks of the tattooer proclaim his lofty place.
I too, in the hands of the cunning, in the sacred cabin of palm,[5]
Have shrunk like the mimosa, and bleated like the lamb;
Round half my tender body, that none shall clasp but you,
For a crest and a fair adornment go dainty lines of blue.
Love, love, beloved Rua, love levels all degrees,
And the well-tattooed Taheia clings panting to your knees."

"—Taheia, song of the morning, how long is the longest love?
A cry, a clasp of the hands, a star that falls from above!
Ever at morn in the blue, and at night when all is black,
Ever it skulks and trembles with the hunter, Death, on its track.
Hear me, Taheia, death! For to-morrow the priest shall awake,
And the names be named of the victims to bleed for the nation's sake;
And first of the numbered many that shall be slain ere noon,
Rua the child of the dirt, Rua the kinless loon.
For him shall the drum be beat, for him be raised the song,
For him to the sacred High-place the chaunting people throng,
For him the oven smoke as for a speechless beast,
And the sire of my Taheia come greedy to the feast."

"Rua, be silent, spare me. Taheia closes her ears.
Pity my yearning heart, pity my girlish years!

Flee from the cruel hands, flee from the knife and coal,
Lie hid in the deeps of the woods, Rua, sire of my soul!"

"Whither to flee, Taheia, whither in all of the land?
The fires of the bloody kitchen are kindled on every hand;
On every hand in the isle a hungry whetting of teeth,
Eyes in the trees above, arms in the brush beneath.
Patience to lie in wait, cunning to follow the sleuth,
Abroad the foes I have fought, and at home the friends of my youth."

"Love, love, beloved Rua, love has a clearer eye,
Hence from the arms of love you go not forth to die.
There, where the broken mountain drops sheer into the glen.
There shall you find a hold from the boldest hunter of men;
There, in the deep recess, where the sun falls only at noon,
And only once in the night enters the light of the moon,
Nor ever a sound but of birds, or the rain when it falls with a shout;
For death and the fear of death beleaguer the valley about.
Tapu it is, but the gods will surely pardon despair;
Tapu, but what of that? If Rua can only dare.
Tapu and tapu and tapu, I know they are every one right;
But the god of every tapu is not always quick to smite.
Lie secret there, my Rua, in the arms of awful gods,
Sleep in the shade of the trees on the couch of the kindly sods,
Sleep and dream of Taheia, Taheia will wake for you;
And whenever the land wind blows and the woods are heavy with dew,
Alone through the horror of night,[6] with food for the soul of her love,
Taheia the undissuaded will hurry true as the dove."

"Taheia, the pit of the night crawls with treacherous things,
Spirits of ultimate air and the evil souls of things;
The souls of the dead, the stranglers, that perch in the trees of the wood,
Waiters for all things human, haters of evil and good."

"Rua, behold me, kiss me, look in my eyes and read;
Are these the eyes of a maid that would leave her lover in need?
Brave in the eye of the day, my father ruled in the fight;
The child of his loins, Taheia, will play the man in the night."

So it was spoken, and so agreed, and Taheia arose
And smiled in the stars and was gone, swift as the swallow goes;
And Rua stood on the hill, and sighed, and followed her flight,
And there were lodges below, each with its door alight;
From folk that sat on the terrace and drew out the even long
Sudden crowings of laughter, monotonous drone of song;
The quiet passage of souls over his head in the trees;[7]
And from all around the haven the crumbling thunder of seas.
"Farewell, my home," said Rua. "Farewell, O quiet seat!
To-morrow in all your valleys the drum of death shall beat."

III. THE FEAST

Dawn as yellow as sulphur leaped on the naked peak,
And all the village was stirring, for now was the priest to speak.
Forth on his terrace he came, and sat with the chief in talk;
His lips were blackened with fever, his cheeks were whiter than chalk;
Fever clutched at his hands, fever nodded his head,
But, quiet and steady and cruel, his eyes shone ruby-red.
In the earliest rays of the sun the chief rose up content;
Braves were summoned, and drummers; messengers came and went;
Braves ran to their lodges, weapons were snatched from the wall;
The commons herded together, and fear was over them all.
Festival dresses they wore, but the tongue was dry in their mouth,
And the blinking eyes in their faces skirted from north to south.

Now to the sacred enclosure gathered the greatest and least,
And from under the shade of the banyan arose the voice of the feast,
The frenzied roll of the drum, and a swift, monotonous song.
Higher the sun swam up; the trade wind level and strong
Awoke in the tops of the palms and rattled the fans aloud,
And over the garlanded heads and shining robes of the crowd
Tossed the spiders of shadow, scattered the jewels of sun.
Forty the tale of the drums, and the forty throbbed like one;

A thousand hearts in the crowd, and the even chorus of song,
Swift as the feet of a runner, trampled a thousand strong.

And the old men leered at the ovens and licked their lips
for the food;
And the women stared at the lads, and laughed and looked
to the wood.
As when the sweltering baker, at night, when the city is
dead,
Alone in the trough of labour treads and fashions the bread;
So in the heat. and the reek, and the touch of woman and
man,
The naked spirit of evil kneaded the hearts of the clan.

Now cold was at many a heart, and shaking in many a seat;
For there were the empty baskets, but who was to furnish
the meat?
For here was the nation assembled, and there were the ovens
anigh,
And out of a thousand singers nine were numbered to die.
Till, of a sudden, a shock, a mace in the air, a yell,
And, struck in the edge of the crowd, the first of the victims
fell.[8]
Terror and horrible glee divided the shrinking clan,
Terror of what was to follow, glee for a diet of man.
Frenzy hurried the chaunt, frenzy rattled the drums;
The nobles, high on the terrace, greedily mouthed their
thumbs;
And once and again and again, in the ignorant crowd
below,
Once and again and again descended the murderous blow.
Now smoked the oven, and now, with the cutting lip of a
shell,
A butcher of ninety winters jointed the bodies well.
Unto the carven lodge, silent, in order due,
The grandees of the nation one after one withdrew;
And a line of laden bearers brought to the terrace foot,
On poles across their shoulders, the last reserve of fruit.

The victims bled for the nobles in the old appointed way;
The fruit was spread for the commons, for all should eat to-day.
And now was the kava brewed, and now the cocoa ran,
Now was the hour of the dance for child and woman and man;
And mirth was in every heart, and a garland on every head,
And all was well with the living and well with the eight who were dead.
Only the chiefs and the priest talked and consulted awhile:
"To-morrow," they said, and "To-morrow," and nodded and seemed to smile:
"Rua the child of dirt, the creature of common clay,
Rua must die to-morrow, since Rua is gone to-day."

Out of the groves of the valley, where clear the blackbirds sang,
Sheer from the trees of the valley the face of the mountain sprang;
Sheer and bare it rose, unscalable barricade,
Beaten and blown against by the generous draught of the trade.
Dawn on its fluted brow painted rainbow light,
Close on its pinnacled crown trembled the stars at night.
Here and there in a cleft clustered contorted trees,
Or the silver beard of a stream hung and swung in the breeze.
High overhead, with a cry, the torrents leaped for the main,
And silently sprinkled below in thin perennial rain.
Dark in the staring noon, dark was Rua's ravine,
Damp and cold was the air, and the face of the cliffs was green.
Here, in the rocky pit, accursed already of old,
On a stone in the midst of a river, Rua sat and was cold.

"Valley of mid-day shadows, valley of silent falls,"
Rua sang, and his voice went hollow about the walls,

"Valley of shadow and rock, a doleful prison to me.
What is the life you can give to a child of the sun and the sea?"
And Rua arose and came to the open mouth of the glen,
Whence he beheld the woods, and the sea, and the houses of men.
Wide blew the riotous trade, and smelt in his nostrils good;
It bowed the boats on the bay, and tore and divided the wood;
It smote and sundered the groves as Moses smote with the rod;
And the streamers of all the trees blew like banners abroad;
And ever and on, in a lull, the trade wind brought him along
A far-off patter of drums and a far-off whisper of song.

Swift as the swallow's wings, the diligent hands on the drum
Fluttered and hurried and throbbed. "Ah, woe that I hear you come,"
Rua cried in his grief, "a sorrowful sound to me,
Mounting far and faint from the resonant shore of the sea!
Woe in the song! for the grave breathes in the singers' breath,
And I hear in the tramp of the drums the beat of the heart of death.
Home of my youth! no more, through all the length of the years,
No more to the place of the echoes of early laughter and tears,
No more shall Rua return; no more as the evening ends,
To crowded eyes of welcome, to the reaching hands of friends."

All day long from the High-place the drums and the singing came,
And the even fell, and the sun went down, a wheel of flame;
And night came gleaning the shadows and hushing the sounds of the wood;
And silence slept on all, where Rua sorrowed and stood.

But still from the shore of the bay the sound of the festival rang,
And still the crowd in the High-place danced and shouted and sang.

Now over all the isle terror was breathed abroad
Of shadowy hands from the trees and shadowy snares in the sod;
And before the nostrils of night, the shuddering hunter of men
Hurried, with beard on shoulder, back to his lighted den.
"Taheia, here to my side!"—"Rua, my Rua, you!"
And cold from the clutch of terror, cold with the damp of the dew,
Taheia, heavy of hair, leaped through the dark to his arms;
Taheia leaped to his clasp, and was folded in from alarms.

"Rua, beloved, here, see what your love has brought;
Coming—alas! returning—swift as the shuttle of thought;
Returning, alas! for to-night, with the beaten drum and the voice,
In the shine of many torches must the sleepless clan rejoice;
And Taheia the well-descended, the daughter of chief and priest,
Taheia must sit in her place in the crowded bench of the feast."
So it was spoken; and she, girding her garment high,
Fled and was swallowed of woods, swift as the sight of an eye.

Night over isle and sea rolled her curtain of stars,
Then a trouble awoke in the air, the east was banded with bars;
Dawn as yellow as sulphur leaped on the mountain height;
Dawn, in the deepest glen, fell a wonder of light;
High and clear stood the palms in the eye of the brightening east,
And lo! from the sides of the sea the broken sound of the feast!

As, when in days of summer, through open windows, the fly
Swift as a breeze and loud as a trump goes by,
But when frosts in the field have pinched the wintering
mouse,
Blindly noses and buzzes and hums in the firelit house:
So the sound of the feast gallantly trampled at night,
So it staggered and drooped, and droned in the morning
light.

IV. THE RAID

It chanced that as Rua sat in the valley of silent falls,
He heard a calling of doves from high on the cliffy walls.
Fire had fashioned of yore, and time had broken, the rocks;
There were rooting crannies for trees and nesting-places for flocks;
And he saw on the top of the cliffs, looking up from the pit of the shade,
A flicker of wings and sunshine, and trees that swung in the trade.
"The trees swing in the trade," quoth Rua, doubtful of words,
"And the sun stares from the sky, but what should trouble the birds?"
Up from the shade he gazed, where high the parapet shone,
And he was aware of a ledge and of things that moved thereon.
"What manner of things are these? Are they spirits abroad by day?
Or the foes of my clan that are come, bringing death by a perilous way?"

The valley was gouged like a vessel, and round like the vessel's lip,
With a cape of the side of the hill thrust forth like the bows of a ship.
On the top of the face of the cape a volley of sun struck fair,
And the cape overhung like a chin a gulph of sunless air.
"Silence, heart! What is that?—that, that flickered and shone,
Into the sun for an instant, and in an instant gone?

Was it a warrior's plume, a warrior's girdle of hair?
Swung in the loop of a rope, is he making a bridge of the air?"

Once and again Rua saw, in the trenchant edge of the sky,
The giddy conjuring done. And then, in the blink of an eye,
A scream caught in with the breath, a whirling packet of limbs,
A lump that dived in the gulph, more swift than a dolphin swims;
And there was the lump at his feet, and eyes were alive in the lump.
Sick was the soul of Rua, ambushed close in a clump;
Sick of soul he drew near, making his courage stout;
And he looked in the face of the thing, and the life of the thing went out.
And he gazed on the tattooed limbs, and, behold, he knew the man:
Hoka, a chief of the Vais, the truculent foe of his clan:
Hoka a moment since that stepped in the loop of the rope,
Filled with the lust of war, and alive with courage and hope.

Again to the giddy cornice Rua lifted his eyes
And again beheld men passing in the armpit of the skies.
"Foes of my race!" cried Rua, "the mouth of Rua is true:
Never a shark in the deep is nobler of soul than you.
There was never a nobler foray, never a bolder plan;
Never a dizzier path was trod by the children of man;
And Rua, your evil-dealer through all the days of his years,
"Counts it honour to hate you, honour to fall by your spears."

And Rua straightened his back. "O Vais, a scheme for a scheme!"
Cried Rua and turned and descended the turbulent stair of the stream,

Leaping from rock to rock as the water-wagtail at home
Flits through resonant valleys and skims by boulder and foam.
And Rua burst from the glen and leaped on the shore of the brook,
And straight for the roofs of the clan his vigorous way he took.
Swift were the heels of his flight, and loud behind as he went
Rattled the leaping stones on the line of his long descent.
And ever he thought as he ran, and caught at his gasping breath,
"O the fool of a Rua, Rua that runs to his death!
But the right is the right," thought Rua, and ran like the wind on the foam,
"The right is the right for ever, and home for ever home.
For what though the oven smoke? And what though I die ere morn?
There was I nourished and tended, and there was Taheia born."
Noon was high on the High-place, the second noon of the feast;
And heat and shameful slumber weighed on people and priest;
And the heart drudged slow in bodies heavy with monstrous meals;
And the senseless limbs were scattered abroad like spokes of wheels;
And crapulous women sat and stared at the stones anigh
With a bestial droop of the lip and a swinish rheum in the eye.
As about the dome of the bees in the time for the drones to fall,
The dead and the maimed are scattered, and lie, and stagger, and crawl;
So on the grades of the terrace, in the ardent eye of the day,
The half-awake and the sleepers clustered and crawled and lay;

And loud as the dome of the bees, in the time of a swarming horde,
A horror of many insects hung in the air and roared.
Rua looked and wondered; he said to himself in his heart:
"Poor are the pleasures of life, and death is the better part."
But lo! on the higher benches a cluster of tranquil folk
Sat by themselves, nor raised their serious eyes, nor spoke:
Women with robes unruffled and garlands duly arranged,
Gazing far from the feast with faces of people estranged;
And quiet amongst the quiet, and fairer than all the fair,
Taheia, the well-descended, Taheia, heavy of hair.
And the soul of Rua awoke, courage enlightened his eyes,
And he uttered a summoning shout and called on the clan to rise.
Over against him at once, in the spotted shade of the trees,
Owlish and blinking creatures scrambled to hands and knees;
On the grades of the sacred terrace, the driveller woke to fear,
And the hand of the ham-drooped warrior brandished a wavering spear.
And Rua folded his arms, and scorn discovered his teeth;
Above the war-crowd gibbered, and Rua stood smiling beneath.
Thick, like leaves in the autumn, faint, like April sleet,
Missiles from tremulous hands quivered around his feet;
And Taheia leaped from her place; and the priest, the ruby-eyed,
Ran to the front of the terrace, and brandished his arms, and cried:
"Hold, O fools, he brings tidings!" and "Hold, 'tis the love of my heart!"
Till lo! in front of the terrace, Rua pierced with a dart.

Taheia cherished his head, and the aged priest stood by,
And gazed with eyes of ruby at Rua's darkening eye.
"Taheia, here is the end, I die a death for a man.
I have given the life of my soul to save an unsavable clan.

See them, the drooping of hams; behold me the blinking crew:
Fifty spears they cast, and one of fifty true!
And you, O priest, the foreteller, foretell for yourself if you can,
Foretell the hour of the day when the Vais shall burst on your clan!
By the head of the tapu cleft, with death and fire in their hand,
Thick and silent like ants, the warriors swarm in the land."

And they tell that when next the sun had climbed to the noonday skies,
It shone on the smoke of feasting in the country of the Vais.

NOTES TO THE FEAST OF FAMINE

In this ballad, I have strung together some of the more striking particularities of the Marquesas. It rests upon no authority; it is in no sense, like "Rahéro," a native story; but a patchwork of details of manners and the impressions of a traveller. It may seem strange, when the scene is laid upon these profligate islands, to make the story hinge on love. But love is not less known in the Marquesas than elsewhere; nor is there any cause of suicide more common in the islands.

Note 1, page 175. *"Pit of Popoi."* Where the breadfruit was stored for preservation.

Note 2, page 175. *"Ruby-red."* The priest's eyes were probably red from the abuse of kava. His beard (*ib.*) is said to be worth an estate; for the beards of old men are the favourite head adornment of the Marquesans, as the hair of women formed their most costly girdle. The former, among this generally beardless and short-lived people, fetch to-day considerable sums.

Note 3, page 175. *"Tikis."* The tiki is an ugly image hewn out of wood or stone.

Note 4, page 178. *"The one-stringed harp."* Usually employed for serenades.

Note 5, page 179. *"The sacred cabin of palm."* Which, however, no woman could approach. I do not know where women were tattooed; probably in the common house, or in the bush, for a woman was a creature of small account. I must guard the reader against supposing Taheia was at all disfigured; the art of the Marquesan tattooer is extreme; and she would appear to be clothed in a web of lace, inimitably delicate, exquisite in pattern, and of a bluish hue that at once contrasts and harmonises with the warm pigment of the native skin. It would be hard to find a woman more becomingly adorned than "a well-tattooed" Marquesan.

Note 6, page 180. *"The horror of night."* The Polynesian fear of ghosts and of the dark has been already referred to. Their life is beleaguered by the dead.

Note 7, page 180. *"The quiet passage of souls."* So, I am told, the natives explain the sound of a little wind passing overhead unfelt.

Note 8, page 183. *"The first of the victims fell."* Without doubt, this whole scene is untrue to fact. The victims were disposed of privately and some time before. And indeed I am far from claiming the credit of any high degree of accuracy for this ballad. Even in a time of famine, it is probable that Marquesan life went far more gaily than is here represented. But the melancholy of to-day lies on the writer's mind.

TICONDEROGA

A LEGEND OF THE WEST HIGHLANDS

TICONDEROGA

This is the tale of the man
  Who heard a word in the night
In the land of the heathery hills,
  In the days of the feud and the fight.
By the sides of the rainy sea,
  Where never a stranger came,
On the awful lips of the dead,
  He heard the outlandish name.
It sang in his sleeping ears,
  It hummed in his waking head:
The name—Ticonderoga,
  The utterance of the dead.

I. THE SAYING OF THE NAME

On the loch-sides of Appin,
When the mist blew from the sea,
A Stewart stood with a Cameron:
An angry man was he.
The blood beat in his ears,
The blood ran hot to his head,
The mist blew from the sea,
And there was the Cameron dead.
"O, what have I done to my friend,
O, what have I done to mysel',
That he should be cold and dead,
And I in the danger of all?

Nothing but danger about me,
Danger behind and before,
Death at wait in the heather
In Appin and Mamore,
Hate at all of the ferries
And death at each of the fords,
Camerons priming gunlocks
And Camerons sharpening swords."

But this was a man of counsel,
This was a man of a score,
There dwelt no pawkier Stewart
In Appin or Mamore.
He looked on the blowing mist,
He looked on the awful dead,
And there came a smile on his face
And there slipped a thought in his head.

Out over cairn and moss,
  Out over scrog and scaur,
He ran as runs the clansman
  That bears the cross of war.
His heart beat in his body,
  His hair clove to his face,
When he came at last in the gloaming
  To the dead man's brother's place.
The east was white with the moon,
  The west with the sun was red,
And there, in the house-doorway,
  Stood the brother of the dead.

"I have slain a man to my danger,
  I have slain a man to my death.
I put my soul in your hands,"
  The panting Stewart saith.
"I lay it bare in your hands,
  For I know your hands are leal;
And be you my targe and bulwark
  From the bullet and the steel."

Then up and spoke the Cameron,
  And gave him his hand again:
"There shall never a man in Scotland
  Set faith in me in vain;
And whatever man you have slaughtered,
  Of whatever name or line,
By my sword and yonder mountain,
  I make your quarrel mine.[1]
I bid you in to my fireside,
  I share with you house and hall;
It stands upon my honour
  To see you safe from all."

It fell in the time of midnight,
  When the fox barked in the den
And the plaids were over the faces
  In all the houses of men,

That as the living Cameron
Lay sleepless on his bed,
Out of the night and the other world,
Came in to him the dead.

"My blood is on the heather,
My bones are on the hill;
There is joy in the home of ravens
That the young shall eat their fill.
My blood is poured in the dust,
My soul is spilled in the air;
And the man that has undone me
Sleeps in my brother's care."

"I'm wae for your death, my brother,
But if all of my house were dead,
I couldnae withdraw the plighted hand,
Nor break the word once said."

"O, what shall I say to our father,
In the place to which I fare?
O, what shall I say to our mother,
Who greets to see me there?
And to all the kindly Camerons
That have lived and died long-syne—
Is this the word you send them,
Fause-hearted brother mine?"

"It's neither fear nor duty,
It's neither quick nor dead
Shall gar me withdraw the plighted hand,
Or break the word once said."

Thrice in the time of midnight,
When the fox barked in the den,
And the plaids were over the faces
In all the houses of men,

Thrice as the living Cameron
Lay sleepless on his bed,
Out of the night and the other world
Came in to him the dead,
And cried to him for vengeance
On the man that laid him low;
And thrice the living Cameron
Told the dead Cameron, no.

"Thrice have you seen me, brother,
But now shall see me no more,
Till you meet your angry fathers
Upon the farther shore.
Thrice have I spoken, and now,
Before the cock be heard,
I take my leave for ever
With the naming of a word.
It shall sing in your sleeping ears,
It shall hum in your waking head,
The name—Ticonderoga,
And the warning of the dead."

Now when the night was over
And the time of people's fears,
The Cameron walked abroad,
And the word was in his ears.
"Many a name I know,
But never a name like this;
O, where shall I find a skilly man
Shall tell me what it is?"
With many a man he counselled
Of high and low degree,
With the herdsmen on the mountains
And the fishers of the sea.
And he came and went unweary,
And read the books of yore,
And the runes that were written of old
On the stones upon the moor.

And many a name he was told,
  But never the name of his fears—
Never, in east or west,
  The name that rang in his ears:
Names of men and of clans;
  Names for the grass and the tree,
For the smallest tarn in the mountains,
  The smallest reef in the sea:
Names for the high and low,
  The names of the craig and the flat;
But in all the land of Scotland,
  Never a name like that.

II. THE SEEKING OF THE NAME

And now there was speech in the south,
  And a man of the south that was wise,
A periwig'd lord of London,[2]
  Called on the clans to rise.
And the riders rode, and the summons
  Came to the western shore,
To the land of the sea and the heather,
  To Appin and Mamore.
It called on all to gather
  From every scrog and scaur,
That loved their fathers' tartan
  And the ancient game of war.
And down the watery valley
  And up the windy hill,
Once more, as in the olden,
  The pipes were sounding shrill;
Again in highland sunshine
  The naked steel was bright;
And the lads, once more in tartan,
  Went forth again to fight.

"O, why should I dwell here
  With a weird upon my life,
When the clansmen shout for battle
  And the war-swords clash in strife?
I cannae joy at feast,
  I cannae sleep in bed,
For the wonder of the word
  And the warning of the dead.
It sings in my sleeping ears
  It hums in my waking head,
The name—Ticonderoga,
  The utterance of the dead.

Then up, and with the fighting men
To march away from here,
Till the cry of the great war-pipe
Shall drown it in my ear!"

Where flew King George's ensign
The plaided soldiers went:
They drew the sword in Germany,
In Flanders pitched the tent.
The bells of foreign cities
Rang far across the plain:
They passed the happy Rhine,
They drank the rapid Main.
Through Asiatic jungles
The Tartans filed their way,
And the neighing of the warpipes
Struck terror in Cathay.[3]
"Many a name have I heard," he thought,
"In all the tongues of men,
Full many a name both here and there,
Full many both now and then.
When I was at home in my father's house
In the land of the naked knee,
Between the eagles that fly in the lift
And the herrings that swim in the sea,
And now that I am a captain-man
With a braw cockade in my hat—
Many a name have I heard," he thought,
"But never a name like that."

III. THE PLACE OF THE NAME

There fell a war in a woody place,
Lay far across the sea,
A war of the march in the mirk midnight
And the shot from behind the tree,
The shaven head and the painted face,
The silent foot in the wood,
In a land of a strange, outlandish tongue
That was hard to be understood.

It fell about the gloaming
The general stood with his staff,
He stood and he looked east and west
With little mind to laugh.
"Far have I been and much have I seen,
And kent both gain and loss,
But here we have woods on every hand
And a kittle water to cross.
Far have I been and much have I seen,
But never the beat of this;
And there's one must go down to that waterside
To see how deep it is."

It fell in the dusk of the night
When unco things betide,
The skilly captain, the Cameron,
Went down to that waterside.
Canny and soft the captain went;
And a man of the woody land,
With the shaven head and the painted face,
Went down at his right hand.

It fell in the quiet night,
  There was never a sound to ken;
But all of the woods to the right and left
  Lay filled with the painted men.

"Far have I been and much have I seen,
  Both as a man and boy,
But never have I set forth a foot
  On so perilous an employ."
It fell in the dusk of the night
  When unco things betide,
That he was aware of a captain-man
  Drew near to the waterside.
He was aware of his coming
  Down in the gloaming alone;
And he looked in the face of the man
  And lo! the face was his own.
"This is my weird," he said,
  "And now I ken the worst;
For many shall fall the morn,
  But I shall fall with the first.
O, you of the outland tongue,
  You of the painted face,
This is the place of my death;
  Can you tell me the name of the place?"
"Since the Frenchmen have been here
  They have called it Sault-Marie;
But that is a name for priests
  And for not you and me.
It went by another word,"
  Quoth he of the shaven head:
"It was called Ticonderoga
  In the days of the great dead."

And it fell on the morrow's morning,
  In the fiercest of the fight,
That the Cameron bit the dust
  As he foretold at night;
And far from the hills of heather,
  Far from the isles of the sea,
He sleeps in the place of the name
  As it was doomed to be.

NOTES TO TICONDEROGA

Introduction.—I first heard this legend of my own country from that friend of men of letters, Mr. Alfred Nutt, "there in roaring London's central stream," and since the ballad first saw the light of day in *Scribner's Magazine,* Mr. Nutt and Lord Archibald Campbell have been in public controversy on the facts. Two clans, the Camerons and the Campbells, lay claim to this bracing story; and they do well: the man who preferred his plighted troth to the commands and menaces of the dead is an ancestor worth disputing. But the Campbells must rest content: they have the broad lands and the broad page of history; this appanage must be denied them; for between the name of *Cameron* and that of *Campbell,* the muse will never hesitate.

Note 1, page 199. Mr. Nutt reminds me it was "by my sword and Ben Cruachan" the Cameron swore.

Note 2, page 203. *"A periwig'd lord of London."* The first Pitt.

Note 3, page 204. *"Cathay."* There must be some omission in General Stewart's charming *History of the Highland Regiments,* a book that might well be republished and continued; or it scarce appears how our friend could have got to China.

HEATHER ALE

A GALLOWAY LEGEND

HEATHER ALE

From the bonny bells of heather
They brewed a drink long-syne,
Was sweeter far than honey,
Was stronger far than wine.
They brewed it and they drank it,
And lay in a blessed swound
For days and days together
In their dwellings underground.

There rose a king in Scotland,
A fell man to his foes,
He smote the Picts in battle,
He hunted them like roes.
Over miles of the red mountain
He hunted as they fled,
And strewed the dwarfish bodies
Of the dying and the dead.

Summer came in the country,
Red was the heather bell;
But the manner of the brewing
None was alive to tell.
In graves that were like children's
On many a mountain head,
The Brewsters of the Heather
Lay numbered with the dead.

The king in the red moorland
Rode on a summer's day;
And the bees hummed, and the curlews
Cried beside the way.

The king rode, and was angry,
  Black was his brow and pale,
To rule in a land of heather
  And lack the Heather Ale.

It fortuned that his vassals,
  Riding free on the heath,
Came on a stone that was fallen
  And vermin hid beneath.
Rudely plucked from their hiding,
  Never a word they spoke:
A son and his aged father—
  Last of the dwarfish folk.

The king sat high on his charger,
  He looked on the little men;
And the dwarfish and swarthy couple
  Looked at the king again.
Down by the shore he had them;
  And there on the giddy brink—
"I will give you life, ye vermin,
  For the secret of the drink."

There stood the son and father,
  And they looked high and low;
The heather was red around them,
  The sea rumbled below.
And up and spoke the father,
  Shrill was his voice to hear:
"I have a word in private,
  A word for the royal ear.

"Life is dear to the aged,
  And honour a little thing;
I would gladly sell the secret,"
  Quoth the Pict to the King.

His voice was small as a sparrow's,
And shrill and wonderful clear:
"I would gladly sell my secret,
Only my son I fear.

"For life is a little matter,
And death is nought to the young;
And I dare not sell my honour
Under the eye of my son.
Take *him*, O king, and bind him,
And cast him far in the deep;
And it's I will tell the secret
That I have sworn to keep."

They took the son and bound him,
Neck and heels in a thong,
And a lad took him and swung him,
And flung him far and strong,
And the sea swallowed his body,
Like that of a child of ten;—
And there on the cliff stood the father,
Last of the dwarfish men.

"True was the word I told you:
Only my son I feared;
For I doubt the sapling courage
That goes without the beard.
But now in vain is the torture,
Fire shall never avail:
Here dies in my bosom
The secret of Heather Ale."

NOTES TO HEATHER ALE

Among the curiosities of human nature, this legend claims a high place. It is needless to remind the reader that the Picts were never exterminated, and form to this day a large proportion of the folk of Scotland: occupying the eastern and the central parts, from the Firth of Forth, or perhaps the Lammermoors, upon the south, to the Ord of Caithness on the north. That the blundering guess of a dull chronicler should have inspired men with imaginary loathing for their own ancestors is already strange: that it should have begotten this wild legend seems incredible. Is it possible the chronicler's error was merely nominal? that what he told, and what the people proved themselves so ready to receive, about the Picts, was true or partly true of some anterior and perhaps Lappish savages, small of stature, black of hue, dwelling underground—possibly also the distillers of some forgotten spirit? See Mr. Campbell's *Tales of the West Highlands.*

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could stand;
The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day;
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and the North;
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared;
But every tack made we brought the North Head close aboard:
So 's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running high,
And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore home;

The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed out;
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer;
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)
This day of our adversity was blessèd Christmas morn,
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair;
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves,
Go dancing round the china-plates that stand upon the shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me,
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to sea;
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way,
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessèd Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.
"All hands to loose topgallant sails," I heard the captain call.
"By the Lord, she'll never stand it," our first mate, Jackson, cried.
. . . "It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson," he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and good,
And the ship smelt up to windward just as though she understood.
As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,
We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me,
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea;
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing old.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

FAMILIAR EPISTLE

Boulogne-sur-Mer, Wednesday, 3rd or 4th September, 1872.

Blame me not that this epistle
Is the first you have from me.
Idleness has held me fettered;
But at last the times are bettered
And once more I wet my whistle
Here, in France beside the sea.

All the green and idle weather
I have had in sun and shower
Such an easy, warm subsistence,
Such an indolent existence,
I should find it hard to sever
Day from day and hour from hour.

Many a tract-provided ranter
May upbraid me, dark and sour,
Many a bland Utilitarian
Or excited Millenarian,
—"*Pereunt et imputantur*,
You must speak to every hour."

But (the very term's deceptive)
You at least my friend will see
That in sunny grassy meadows,
Trailed across by moving shadows
To be actively receptive
Is as much as man can be.

He that all the winter grapples
  Difficulties—thrust and ward—
    Needs to cheer him thro' his duty
    Memories of sun and beauty,
Orchards with the russet apples
  Lying scattered on the sward.

Many such I keep in prison,
  Keep them here at heart unseen,
    Till my muse again rehearses
    Long years hence, and in my verses
You shall meet them rearisen
  Ever comely, ever green.

You know how they never perish,
  How, in time of later art,
    Memories consecrate and sweeten
    These defaced and tempest-beaten
Flowers of former years we cherish
  Half a life, against our heart.

Most, those love-fruits withered greenly,
  Those frail, sickly armourettes,
    How they brighten with the distance
    Take new strength and new existence
Till we see them sitting queenly
  Crowned and courted by regrets!

All that loveliest and best is,
  Aureole-fashion round their head
    They that looked in life but plainly,
    How they stir our spirits vainly
When they come to us Alcestis—
Like returning from the dead!

Not the old love but another,
  Bright she comes at memory's call,
    Our forgotten vows reviving
    To a newer, livelier living,
As the dead child to the mother
  Seems the fairest child of all.

Thus, our Goethe, sacred master,
  Travelling backward thro' his youth
    Surely wandered wrong in trying
    To renew the old, undying
Loves that cling in memory faster
  Than they ever lived in truth.

So; en voilà assez, de mauvais vers. Let us finish with a word or two in honest prose, tho' indeed I shall soon be back again and, if you be down in town as I hope, so soon get bribed again down the Lothian Road by a cigar or two and a liquor, that it is perhaps scarce worth the postage to send my letter on before me. I have just been long enough away to be satisfied and even anxious to get home again and talk the matter over with my friends. I shall have plenty to tell you; and principally plenty that I do not care to write; and I daresay you, too, will have a lot of gossip. What about Fevrier? Is the L. J. R. think you to go naked and unashamed this winter? He with his charming idiosyncrasy was in my eyes the vine-leaf that preserved our self-respect. All the rest of us are such shadows, compared to his full-flavoured personality; but I must not spoil my own début. I am trenching upon one of the essayettes which I propose to introduce, as a novelty this year before that august assembly. For we must not let it die. It is a sickly baby, but what with nursing and pap, and the like, I do not see why it should not have a strong manhood after all, and perhaps a green old age. Eh! when we are old (if we ever should be) that too will be one of those cherished memories I have been so rhapsodizing over. We must consecrate our room. We must make it a museum of bright recollections; so that we

may go back there white-headed, and say, "*Vixi.*" After all, new countries, sun, music, and all the rest, can never take down our gusty, rainy, smoky, grim old city out of the first place that it has been making for itself in the bottom of my soul, by all pleasant and hard things that have befallen me, for the past twenty years or so. My heart is buried there—say, in Advocates Close!

I don't know why I write so sadly and sentimentally. Momus is absent on a journey and I may cut my flesh and wail to him as much as I will—he cannot hear me. Talking about my flesh, I am all out in [*two words partly obliterated*] the result of mosquito bites. I am a horrid spectacle and am haunted at bed and board by my own resemblance to the "Monarch." Simpson and I got on very well together, and made a very suitable pair. I like him much better than I did when I started, which was almost more than I hoped for.

If you should chance to see Bob, give him my news, and if you have the letter about you, let him see it.

Every your afft. friend,

R. L. Stevenson.

P. S.—He can give you some of mine.
To * * * * *

THE ARABESQUE

COMPLAINT OF AN ARTIST

I made a fresco on the coronal,
Amid the sounding silence and the void
Of life's wind-spent and unfrequented hall.
I drew the nothings that my soul enjoyed;
The petty image of the enormous fact
I fled; and when the sun soared over all
And threw a brightness on the painted tract,
Lo, the vain lines were reading on the wall!
In vain we think; our life about us lies

O'erscrawled with crooked writ; we toil in vain
To hear the hymn of ancient harmonies
That quire upon the mountain or the plain;
And from the august silence of the skies
Babble of speech returns to us again.

AULD REEKIE

When chitterin' cauld the day sall daw,
Loud may your bonny bugles blaw
And loud your drums may beat.
Hie owre the land at evenfa'
Your lamps may glitter raw by raw,
Along the gowsty street.

I gang nae mair where ance I gaed,
By Brunston, Fairmileheid, or Braid;
But far frae Kirk and Tron.
O still ayont the muckle sea,
Still are ye dear, and dear to me,
Auld Reekie, still and on!

THE TOUCH OF LIFE

I saw a circle in a garden sit
Of dainty dames and solemn cavaliers,
Whereof some shuddered at the burrowing nit,
And at the carrion worm some burst in tears;
And all, as envying the abhorred estate
Of empty shades and disembodied elves,
Under the laughing stars, early and late,
Sat shamefast at their birth and at themselves.
The keeper of the house of life is fear;
In the rent lion is the honey found

By him that rent it; out of stony ground
The toiler, in the morning of the year,
Beholds the harvest of his grief abound
And the green corn put forth the tender ear.

THE COCK SHALL CROW

In the morning grey
  The bugles blow
At the break of day:
  The cock shall sing
And the merry bugles ring,
  And all the little brown birds
    sing upon the spray.

The thorn shall blow
  In the month of May,
And my love shall go
  In her holiday array:
But I shall lie
  In the Kirkyard nigh,
While all the little brown birds
    sing upon the spray.

OF HIS PITIABLE TRANSFORMATION

[Reprinted from Andrew Lang's "At the Sign of the Ship," in *Longman's Magazine,* April, 1888, the verses being by Stevenson.]

The following rondel was given, twelve years ago, to a friend of mine, by another friend of mine. He is so far away, and it is such a very little poem, that I venture to print it without telegraphing to the Adirondacks for permission. Probably the author's hand will be easily recognized, and I presume that, twelve years ago, the sage who laments his youth was just twenty-five. And as to his hair being "grey" it is not even "brindled."

I WHO was young so long,
  Young and alert and gay,
  Now that my hair is grey
Begin to change my song.

Now I know right from wrong,
  Now I know *pay* and *pray*,
I who was young so long,
  Young and alert and gay.

Now I follow the throng,
  Walk in the beaten way,
  Hear what the elders say,
And own that I was wrong—
I who was young so long.

FINE PACIFIC ISLANDS

[Reprinted from Andrew Lang's "At the Sign of the Ship," *Longman's Magazine*, January, 1889.]

The next sea-song came to us from the sea in an envelope with the post-mark "Taiohae Taiti, 21, Août, '88." The handwriting of the address appears to be that of the redoubted Viking who sailed in John Silver's crew, who winged the *Black Arrow*, and who wandered in the heather with Alan Breck. *Aut Robertus Ludovicus aut Diabolus* sent the song, I presume, but whether he really heard it sung at Rotherhithe, or whether he is the builder of the lofty rhyme, is between himself and his conscience.

(*Heard in a public-house at Rotherhithe*)

THE jolly English yellowboy
  Is a 'ansome coin when new,
The Yankee Double-eagle
  Is large enough for two.

O, these may do for seaport towns,
For cities these may do;
But the dibbs that takes the Hislands
Are the dollars of Peru:
O, the fine Pacific Hislands,
O, the dollars of Peru!

It's there we buy the cocoanuts
Mast 'eaded in the blue;
It's there we trap the lasses
All awaiting for the crew;
It's there we buy the trader's rum
What bores a seaman through . . .
In the fine Pacific Hislands
With the dollars of Peru:
In the fine Pacific Hislands
With the dollars of Peru!

Now, messmates, when my watch is up
And I am quite broached to,
I'll give a tip to 'Evving
Of the 'ansome thing to do:
Let 'em just refit this sailor-man
And launch him off anew
To cruise among the Hislands
Of the dollars of Peru:
In the fine Pacific Hislands
With the dollars of Peru!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

A MARTIAL ELEGY FOR SOME LEAD SOLDIERS

The following little poem was written in 1882, and printed in leaflet form at Davos by Stevenson's young stepson, Samuel L. Osbourne. To a copy presented by Stevenson to Edmund Gosse are subjoined the following lines:

> The verse is mine, the printing done by Sam,
> The Boss of printing Bosses;
> This copy, of the first edition last,
> I testify is Gosse's.
>
> R. L. S.

For certain soldiers lately dead
Our reverent dirge shall here be said.
Them, when their martial leader called,
No dread preparative appalled;
But leaden-hearted, leaden-heeled,
I marked them steadfast in the field.
Death grimly sided with the foe,
And smote each leaden hero low.
Proudly they perished, one by one:
The dread Pea-cannon's work was done!
O not for them the tears we shed,
Consigned to their congenial lead;
But while unmoved their sleep they take,
We mourn for their dear Captain's sake,
For their dear Captain, who shall smart
Both in his pocket and his heart,
Who saw his heroes shed their gore
And lacked a shilling to buy more!

BRASHIANA

When at Davos, in the winter of 1881, Stevenson composed a series of burlesque sonnets, of which only the following appears to have survived, in memory of Peter Brash, a publican of Edinburgh, whose tavern was a favourite resort

in the old university days. The effusions went by the name of Brashiana, and on receiving the proof sheet of probably this sonnet from Charles Baxter, the author wrote him an amusing letter from Nice dated January 12, 1883, setting forth in "braid Scots" the plan of the forthcoming volume. Nothing more, however, was heard of the project, and probably only one or two proofs of the sonnet were struck off.

The sonnet was reprinted anonymously in *The Outlook* for February 26, 1898, under the heading of "A Literary Enigma," with an editorial invitation for the solution of the authorship. In the next issue, March 5, 1898, an answer was contributed by a lady, "I say it is by Robert Louis Stevenson, Prince of Jesters," and the editor appended the following note: "But about the Sonnet? Ah! thereby hangs a tale, and if we can prevail upon our contributor C. B. to unfold it . . . a not unamusing record of Stevenson's 'High Jinks' in the early seventies may be unrolled." Mr. Charles Baxter did not, however, see fit to reveal any Brashiana secrets.

We found Him first as in the Dells of May
  The Dreaming Damsel finds the Earliest Flower:
  Thoughtless we wandered in the evening hour:
Aimless and pleased we went our random way:
In the foot-haunted City, in the Night,
  Among the alternate Lamps we went and came
  Till like a humorous Thunderbolt, that Name,
The hated Name of Brash, assailed our Sight.
We saw, we paused, we entered, seeking Gin.
  His Wrath, like a huge Breaker on the Beach,
    Broke instant forth. He on the Counter beat
    In his infantile Fury; and his Feet
Danced impotent Wrath upon the Floor within.
  Still as we fled we heard his Idiot Screech.

THE LIGHT-KEEPER

I

The brilliant kernel of the night,
The flaming lightroom circles me:
I sit within a blaze of light
Held high above the dusky sea.
Far off the surf doth break and roar
Along bleak miles of moonlit shore,
Where through the tides the tumbling wave
Falls in an avalanche of foam
And drives its churnèd waters home
Up many an undercliff and cave.

The clear bell chimes: the clockworks strain:
The turning lenses flash and pass,
Frame turning within glittering frame
With frosty gleam of moving glass:
Unseen by me, each dusky hour
The sea-waves welter up the tower
Or in the ebb subside again;
And ever and anon all night,
Drawn from afar by charm of light,
A sea-bird beats against the pane.

And lastly when dawn ends the night
And belts the semi-orb of sea,
The tall, pale pharos in the light
Looks white and spectral as may be.
The early ebb is out: the green
Straight belt of sea-weed now is seen,
That round the basement of the tower
Marks out the interspace of tide;
And watching men are heavy-eyed,
And sleepless lips are dry and sour.

The night is over like a dream:
  The sea-birds cry and dip themselves;
And in the early sunlight, steam
  The newly-bared and dripping shelves,
Around whose verge the glassy wave
With lisping wash is heard to lave;
  While, on the white tower lifted high,
With yellow light in faded glass
The circling lenses flash and pass,
  And sickly shine against the sky.

II

As the steady lenses circle
With a frosty gleam of glass;
And the clear bell chimes,
And the oil brims over the lip of the burner,
Quiet and still at his desk,
The lonely light-keeper
Holds his vigil.

Lured from afar,
The bewildered sea-gull beats
Dully against the lantern;
Yet he stirs not, lifts not his head
From the desk where he reads,
Lifts not his eyes to see
The chill blind circle of night
Watching him through the panes.
This is his country's guardian,
The outmost sentry of peace.
This is the man,
Who gives up all that is lovely in living
For the means to live.

Poetry cunningly gilds
The life of the Light-Keeper,
Held on high in the blackness
In the burning kernel of night.
The seaman sees and blesses him;
The Poet, deep in a sonnet,
Numbers his inky fingers
Fitly to praise him;
Only we behold him,
Sitting, patient and stolid,
Martyr to a salary.

THREE LETTERS FROM ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON TO MRS. SITWELL. 1873-1875

The following letters seem worthy of preservation inasmuch as they are the origin of three poems written to Mrs. Sitwell and are here given to the world in their entirety. When Stevenson was collecting all available material for his book of poems, "Underwoods," he wrote to his friend, Mrs. Sitwell, and in answer to his inquiry she returned these letters to him that he might make use of the verses. He used the first three verses only of the poem which begins "I read, dear friend," and these will be found under the title "To F. J. S."

Do try to be well, and SLEEP.

Here is a word just to tell you how well I am. I never did walk in such rain as I walked in last night; it fell all round the umbrella so thick and white in the lamplight, that one felt as if one were under a glass case. But my heart was full of happiness; so I did not mind it a single naughty word. Hansom after hansom took me in, lost heart at the weather and turned me out again; so that it was a sort of ride and tie all the way to the Adelaide. When I got out of my last hansom there, I stepped into the gutter and was immediately aware of the fact that it was flooded and I had stepped into four or five inches of running water. Up the hill, it was rather solemn work; but I managed to keep myself going with cigarettes, by keeping my hands dry and making one whenever I got into a bit of shelter, and I was very placid in mind. It lightened occasionally—very blue lightning. I got here about one, and had some brandy, turned into bed and have had a capital sleep; I have no traces of damage save a sort of far-away suggestion of

rheumatics such a night *will* give me when I am become the toothless old man in the fur cap.

I think I have got my proof all right. I copy you here the verses; they are not fit to be criticised of course; so you mustn't do so; they're awfully *true,* though I say it as shouldn't.

All things on earth and sea,
All that the white stars see,
Turns about you and me.

And when we two are not,
Is darkness like a blot
And life and love forgot.

But when we pass that way,
The night breaks into day,
The year breaks into May,

The earth through all her bowers
Carols and breathes and flowers
About this love of ours. R. L. S.

Swansten,

On the back, the desired poem; for I believe it is one, though small.

I have not been well, hence am here, renewing my mighty youth in solitude.

News so far all right, but the answer to my telegram is now due, which would excite me if I thought of it. Hence I think of it—never, and go on working like a slave, and coaching myself with tonics, silence and the air of the hills. I dare say, my dear, I am a fool; but instead of doing work which would have brought me money, I have been busy on a game about morals which is nearly half drafted. It seems very strange to me in some ways; I suspect the public will think it silly and revolting, and no more; and I do not be-

lieve anyone will publish it; but I am certainly not ashamed; I have had to do so much already, and in all likelihood will have to do so much more in the future, for dear life and the baker, that I am sure I do rightly in snatching this moment to do something that I hope may do good, even although it can bring me nothing back.

It is hard to know anything in this back court of a world; not even one's own heart; but you know well enough about me, I hope; and if I were to hence or to disappear to-morrow, you would not think too badly of me? You know what I would think of you, at least. But indeed I am going from bad to worse I fear; I grow unkind, suspicious, silent, hating mankind. And yet if people only knew, there is such a desire of kindness in my heart. But that's what the world is; we cannot change it. But I am a sad young man at times, and to-night is one of them. It all seems such a waste.

R. L. S.

Dick Swiveller's pepper-castor has been going; but you know I am a weepist.

HERE you rest among the vallies, maiden known to but a few;
Here you sleep unsighing, but how oft of yore you sighed!
And how oft your feet elastic trod a measure in the dew
On a green beside the river ere you died!

Where are now the country lovers whom you trembled to be near—
Who with shy advances, in the falling eventide,
Grasped the tightlier at your fingers, whispered lowlier in your ear,
On a green beside the river ere you died?

All the sweet old country dancers who went round with you in tune,
Dancing, flushed and silent, in the silent eventide,
All departed by enchantment at the rising of the moon
From the green beside the river when you died.

Here is what I have often said in good prose put into bad verse:

I READ, dear friend, in your dear face
Your life's tale told with perfect grace;
The river of your life I trace
Up the sun-chequered devious bed
To its far distant fountainhead.

Not one quick beat of your warm heart,
Nor thought that came to you apart,
Pleasure nor pity, love nor pain
Nor sorrow, has gone by in vain;

But as some long wood-wandering child
Brings home with him at evening mild
The thorns and flowers of all the wild,
From your whole life, O fair and true,
Your flowers and thorns you bring with you.

And thorns. But did the sculptor spare
Sharp steel upon the marble, ere,
After long vigils and much care
And cruel discipline of blows,
From the dead stone the statue rose?

Think you I grudge the seed, who see
Broad armed the consummated tree?
Or would go back if it might be
To some old geologic time
With Saurians wallowing in fat slime,

Before the rivers and the rains
Had fashioned and made fair with plains
And shadowy places fresh with flowers,
This green and quiet world of ours,

When, as the grass in springtime heals
The furrow of the winter's wheels,
Serene maturity conceals
All memory on the perfect earth
Of the byegone tempestuous birth.

I send you this rubbish just to show you, my dear Amelia (which is the name of your *face*, I have found no name yet for your spirit), that I thought of you. Don't criticise it, for the love of Charity, but remember that it was written by a—an imbecile I was going to say, and I'm not much better.

R. L. S.

PLAYS

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AND

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

EDITORIAL NOTE

In reprinting the following plays by R. L. Stevenson and W. E. Henley the original editions have been faithfully followed, thus presenting the plays as conceived by the authors. Other editions have appeared (the originals have never before been reprinted) and, while they may be better suited to the needs of the stage, they do not correctly represent the original literary efforts of the authors, because of the changes, omissions and interpolations made at the suggestion of dramatic critics and managers. According to Mr. A. W. Pinero, Stevenson's plays enjoyed but a slender popularity because his literary bias far outweighed his theatrical experience. There is hardly a novelist or poet of the nineteenth century who has not at some time attempted to write for the stage and they have all failed, with scarce an exception, not only to achieve theatrical success, but even, in any appreciable degree, to enrich our dramatic literature. Shelley, Browning, Scott, Coleridge, Byron, Tennyson, Dickens, Thackeray, and many other writers of genius failed when they assumed the rôle of the playwright. Stevenson possessed dramatic talent and there is no doubt that he would have developed theatrical talent and knowledge if he had consistently applied his energies along these lines.

"Deacon Brodie, or the Double Life," is founded on fact. There was a real William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights, who was a burglar by night and an influential citizen by day. The other characters, Jean Watt, Humphrey Moore, George Smith, and Andrew Ainslie, all existed and all served the Deacon.

The version of the play as here given is reprinted from the exceedingly scarce edition of 1880, a presentation copy

from the authors to J. Brander Mathews, dated in the inscription 4-7-83.

In "Beau Austin" we certainly have Stevenson's nearest approach to an effective drama; it is a charming play and really interesting on the stage. The original edition, privately issued in 1884, is exactly reprinted, and it differs largely from the later versions.

"Admiral Guinea" is a play full of beautiful speeches, and if beautiful speeches and brilliant dialogue made a great drama, "Admiral Guinea" would be a great success. Stevenson's aim in writing the play was to reproduce the atmosphere of the conventional nautical melodrama, to rehandle the material and replace its bald language with dialogue of literary merit. The text here given is reprinted from a copy of the scarce original edition, privately printed in 1884, and the copy used bears a presentation inscription by W. E. Henley to Brander Mathews.

"Macaire" is an adaptation, and is professedly not an original work save in details of dialogue. The editor has been very fortunate in having for use a copy of the original edition privately printed in Edinburgh in 1885, and also the original proof sheets, as received from the printer with the authors' alterations and additions throughout. By careful comparison he finds that some of these changes as marked on the proof sheets were ignored by the printer when the play went to press. In the present edition the changes as suggested in the proof sheets have been incorporated, and the play appears here for the first time as it came from the pens of the authors.

These four plays are reprinted from copies in the famous collection of Stevensoniana in the private library of George M. Williamson, Esq. This collection is unsurpassed and contains all the rarities. By the courtesy of Mr. Williamson these matchless treasures were placed at the editors' disposal and they have been used freely in the making of the present edition.

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DEACON BRODIE, OR
THE DOUBLE LIFE

A MELODRAMA, FOUNDED ON FACTS, IN FOUR ACTS
AND TEN TABLEAUX

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AND

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

PERSONAGES

Deacon William Brodie, Burgess and Housebreaker.
William Lawson, Procurator-Fiscal, the Deacon's Uncle.
Andrew Ainslie,
George Smith,
Humphrey Moore, } Robbers in the Deacon's Gang.
Captain Rivers, an English Highwayman.
Hunt, a Bow Street Runner.
Old Brodie, the Deacon's Father.
Walter Leslie.
Mary Brodie, the Deacon's Sister.
Jean Watt, the Deacon's Mistress.

Vagabonds, Children, Officers of the Watch, a Workman, Maid-servants.

The Scene is laid in Edinburgh. The Time is about the middle of the Eighteenth Century. The Action, some fifty hours long, begins at eight p. m. on the first day, and ends before midnight on the third.

SYNOPSIS OF ACTS AND TABLEAUX

ACT I. The Two Lives.

Tableau I.	An Apparition.
Tableau II.	Hunt the Runner.
Tableau III.	Mother Clarke's.

ACT II.

Tableau IV.	Evil and Good.

ACT III. Face to Face.

Tableau V.	Jean Watt.
Tableau VI.	King's Evidence.
Tableau VII.	Unmasked.

ACT IV. The Open Door.

Tableau VIII.	The Robbery.
Tableau IX.	The Two Women.
Tableau X.	At Bay.

Curtain.

DEACON BRODIE, OR THE DOUBLE LIFE

ACT I

THE TWO LIVES

TABLEAU I

AN APPARITION

The Stage represents a room in the Deacon's house, furnished partly as a sitting-, partly as a bed-room; in the style of an easy burgess of about 1750. Door, C.: a second and smaller, L. C. Practical window, R.; alcove, supposed to contain bed, L. At the back, a clothes-press and a corner cupboard containing bottles, etc. MARY BRODIE *at needlework;* OLD BRODIE, *a paralytic, in wheeled chair.*

SCENE I

To these LESLIE, *C.*

LESLIE. May I come in?

MARY. Certainly, Mr. Leslie. Come in.

LESLIE. I did not know where to find you.

MARY. The dad and I must have a corner, must we not? So when Willie's friends are in the parlour, he allows us to sit in his room; 'tis a great favour, I can tell you; the place is sacred. Are the others coming?

LESLIE. I left them talking deeply. But I was tired, or else I had another fancy: you may guess which. So I made a pretext, and behold me—welcome, I hope?

MARY. I suppose you mean to be unkind.

LESLIE. And you?—you called me 'Mr.'

MARY. O, there's nothing settled yet. We must all bow to the Deacon in this house; he's the king of it, and if he says

No! to our marriage, Walter, it will be hard for me to say Yes!

LESLIE. Your father wishes to speak, does he not?

MARY (*to* OLD BRODIE). My poor dearie! Do you want to say anything to me? No? Is it to Mr. Leslie, then?

LESLIE. I am listening, Mr. Brodie.

MARY. What is it, daddie?

OLD BRODIE. My son, the Deacon—Deacon Brodie—the first at school.

LESLIE. I know it, Mr. Brodie. Was I not the last in the same class? (*To* MARY.) But he seems to have forgotten me?

MARY. O yes! his mind wanders; he will sit for hours, as you see him, in a maze; and I believe his thoughts keep always running on my brother.

LESLIE. It is so good to sit beside you. By and by it will be always like this. You will not let me speak to the Deacon? You are fast set upon speaking yourself? I could be so eloquent, Mary; I would touch him. I cannot tell you how I fear to trust my happiness to any one else—even to you!

MARY. You do not understand. We are not like other families, we Brodies; we are so clannish, we hold so close together.

LESLIE. You Brodies and your Deacon!

OLD BRODIE. Deacon of his craft, Sir—Deacon of the Wrights—my son. If his mother—his mother—had but lived to see!

MARY. You hear how he runs on. A word about my brother and he catches it. And yet he does not know one-half the Deacon's goodness. For our Will has been like a father to his father and like a mother to me. You know how quietly we live, the dad and I; and you know how fond Will is of pleasuring, and how much he is asked abroad; and yet you would think he was glad to come back to us. Sometimes, I tell you, when I think I might die, and no one know how good a brother I have had, I feel as if I must run out into the street and cry his goodness to the whole town.

But indeed I think we are all Deacon-mad, we Brodies. Are we not, daddie dear? And have we not good reason?

LESLIE. He has a good heart, Mary, and many know it besides you. He is one of the most popular men in Edinburgh, and would be more so, were it not——

MARY. Were it not, Sir?

LESLIE. Well, dear, you know he has a queer temper.

MARY. What of that! I like a man to have a temper.

LESLIE. I'll make at note of it,——And then, the strait-laced think him freer than is right.

MARY. Ah! if they were but half as good themselves!

LESLIE. Amen to that.

SCENE II

To these, BRODIE *and* LAWSON.

MARY *(curtesying).* So, uncle! you have honoured us at last.

LAWSON. *Quam primum,* my dear, *quam primum.*

BRODIE. Well, father, do you know me?

OLD BRODIE. William—ay—Deacon. Greater man—than —his father. (*Brodie sits beside his father and takes his hand.*)

BRODIE. You see, Procurator, the news is as fresh to him as it was five years ago. He was struck down before he got the Deaconship, and lives his lost life in mine.

LAWSON. Ay, I mind. He was aye ettling after a bit handle to his name. He was kind of hurt when first they made me procurator.

MARY. And what have you been talking of?

LAWSON. Just o' thae robberies, Mary. Baith as a burgher and a crown offeecial, I tak' the maist absorbing interest in thae robberies.

LESLIE. Egad, Procurator, and so do I.

(BRODIE *looks quickly at* LESLIE).

LAWSON. There's no a house in Edinburgh safe. The

law is clean helpless—clean helpless! A week syne it was auld Andra Simpson's in the Lawnmarket. Then, naething would set the catamarans but to forgather privily wi' the Provost's ain butler, and tak' unto themselves the Provost's ain plate. And the day, information was laid before me offeecially that the limmers had made infraction, *vi et clam*, into Leddy Mar'get Dalziel's, and left her leddyship wi' no sae muckle's a spune to sup her parritch wi'. It's unbelieveable, it's awfu', it's anti-christian!

Mary. If you only knew them, uncle, what an example you would make! But tell me, is it not strange that men should dare such things, in the midst of a city, and nothing, nothing be known of them? nothing at all?

Leslie. Little, indeed! But we do know that there are several in the gang, and that one at least is an unrivalled workman.

Lawson. Ye're right, sir; ye're vera right, Mr. Leslie. It has been deponed to me offeecially that no a tradesman—no the Deacon here himsel'—could have made a cleaner job wi' Andra Simpson's shutters. And as for the lock o' the Bank—but that's an auld sang.

Brodie. I think you believe too much, Procurator. Rumour's an ignorant jade, I tell you. I've had occasion to see some little of their handiwork—broken cabinets, broken shutters, broken doors—and I find them bunglers. Why, I could do it better myself!

Leslie. Gad, Brodie, you and I might go into partnership. I back myself to watch outside, and I suppose you could do the work of skill within?

Brodie. An opposition company? Leslie, your mind is full of good things. Suppose we begin to-night, and give the Procurator's house the honours of our innocence?

Mary. You could do anything, you two!

Lawson. Onyway, Deacon, ye'd put your ill-gotten gains to a right use; they might come by the wind but they wouldna gang wi' the water; and that's aye a *solatium*, as we say. If I am to be robbit, I would like to be robbit wi' decent folk; and no think o' my bonnie clean siller dirling

among jads and dicers. Faith, William, the mair I think on't, the mair I'm o' Mr. Leslie's mind. Come the night, or come the morn, and I'se gie ye my free permission, and lend ye a hand in at the window forbye!

BRODIE. Come, come, Procurator, lead not our poor clay into temptation. (LESLIE *and* MARY *talk apart.*)

LAWSON. I'm no muckle afraid for your puir clay, as ye ca't. But hark i' your ear—ye're likely, joking apart, to be gey and sune in partnership wi' Mr. Leslie. He and Mary are gey and pack—a'body can see that.

BRODIE. 'Daffin' and want o' wit'—you know the rest.

LAWSON. *Vidi, scivi, et audivi,* as we say in a Sasine, William. Man, because my wig's pouthered do you think I havena a green heart? I was ance a lad mysel', and I ken fine by the glint o' the e'e when a lad's fain and a lassie's willing. And, man, it's the town's talk; *communis error fit jus,* ye ken.

OLD BRODIE. Oh!

LAWSON. See, ye're hurting your faither's hand.

BRODIE. Dear dad, it is not good to have an ill-tempered son.

LAWSON. What the deevil ails ye at the match? 'Od, man, he has a nice bit divot o' Fife corn-land, I can tell ye,—and some Bordeaux wine in his cellar! But I needna speak o' the Bordeaux, ye'll ken the smack o't as weel's I do mysel'; onyway it's grand wine. *Tantum et tale:* I tell ye the *pro's,* find you the *con's,* if ye're able.

BRODIE. I am sorry, Procurator, but I must be short with you. You are talking in the air, as lawyers will. I prefer to drop the subject and it will displease me if you return to it in my hearing.

LESLIE. At four o'clock to-morrow? (*to Mary*).

MARY. At four. (*Exit* MARY, LESLIE *following, C.*)

LAWSON. Ye needna be sae high and mighty.

BRODIE. I ask your pardon, Procurator. But we Brodies, you know our failings—A bad temper and a humour of privacy.

LESLIE (*re-entering C. with note*). For the Precurator-Fiscal.

LAWSON (*reading*). Hunt? Hunt? No, I dinna ken the name, William. I maun tak' the road. There's a man from England at my office: *lex est rex:* I maun be about my business. But I could tak' a doch-an-doris, William; *superflua non nocent*, as we say—an extra dram hurts naebody, Mr. Leslie.

BRODIE (*with bottle and glasses*). Here's your old friend, Procurator. Help yourself, Leslie. O, no thank you, not any for me. You strong people have the advantage of me there. With my attacks, you know, I must always live a bit of a hermit's life.

LAWSON. 'Od, man, that's fine, that's health o' mind and body. Mr. Leslie, here's to you, sir. 'Od, it's harder to end than to begin wi' stuff like that.

SCENE III

To these, SMITH, *C.*

SMITH. Is the king of the castle in, please?

LAWSON (*aside*). Lord's sake, it's Smith.

BRODIE (*to* SMITH). I beg your pardon?

SMITH. I beg yours, sir. If you please, sir, is Mr. Brodie at home, sir?

BRODIE. What do you want with him, my man?

SMITH. I've a message for him, sir, a job of work, sir!

BRODIE. Step into the lobby for a few minutes. I'm engaged.

SMITH. If you please, sir!

SCENE IV

The same, less SMITH; *afterwards,* MARY.

LESLIE. Who's that fellow, Brodie?

BRODIE. An impudent vagabond. How dared he! I never saw him. Ask the Procurator. It's more in his way.

LAWSON. What do you say, sir? What do you mean to insceuuate? I never clapped eyes on his ugly hurdies till the night.

LESLIE. You need not defend yourself, Procurator, you are Cæsar's wife.

LAWSON. I am naething of the sort, sir.

BRODIE. Come, come, Procurator, it was professionally meant. A joke's a joke.

LAWSON. Joke at leisure, Deacon, ye kenna wha may joke yersel', sir.

BRODIE. This fellow's coming seems to have soured the air. We are all Pharisees, I tell you—or all rogues. Not one of the three of us, Leslie, but would recoil from being the friend of that scarecrow. And yet, perhaps, if we knew the friends we had, it would seem all one.

LESLIE (*laying his hand on* BRODIE'S *shoulder*). Ay, Brodie, but we do know them, and we think the world of them.

BRODIE. We are more acquainted with each other's tailors, believe me. You, Leslie, are a very pleasant creature. My uncle Lawson is the Procurator-Fiscal. I—what am I?—I am the Deacon of the Wrights, my ruffles are generally clean. And you think the world of me? Bravo!

LAWSON. A wheen nonsense! An honest man's an honest man, and a randy thief a randy thief, and neither mair nor less. (*Enter* MARY, *C.*). But here's Mary. I'll awa'. Guid-bye to you, Mr. Brodie. Ay, he doesna' seem to notice me. Guid-night, and joy be wi' ye a'.

LESLIE (*to* MARY). Don't forget to-morrow.

MARY. At four o'clock. Good-bye!

SCENE V

MARY, OLD BRODIE; BRODIE *returning, C.*

MARY. O Willie, I am glad you did not go with them; I am so glad to see you come back; I have something to tell you. If you knew how happy I am, you would clap your hands, Will. But come, sit you down there, and be my good big brother, and I will kneel here and take your hand. We must keep close to Dad, and then he will feel happiness in the air. The poor old love, if we could only tell him! But I sometimes think his heart has gone to heaven already, and takes a part in all our joys and sorrows; and it is only his poor body that remains here, helpless and ignorant. Come, Will, sit you down, and ask me questions—or guess —that will be better, guess.

BRODIE. Not to-night, Mary; not to-night. I have other fish to fry, and they won't wait.

MARY. Not one minute for your sister? One little minute for your little sister?

BRODIE. Minutes are precious, Mary. I have to work for all of us, and the clock is always busy. There's someone waiting in the lobby even now. In the very lobby, Mary. Help me with the dad's chair. And then to bed, and dream happy things. And to-morrow morning I will hear your news—your good news—it must be good, you look so proud and glad. But to-night it cannot be.

MARY. I hate your business—I hate all business. To think of chairs, and tables, and footrules, all dead and wooden—and cold pieces of money with the King's ugly head on them—and here is your sister—your pretty sister, if you please!—with something to tell, which she would not tell you for the world, and would give the world to have you guess! and you won't?—Not you! For business! Fie, Deacon Brodie! But I'm too happy to find fault with you.

BRODIE. 'And me a Deacon,' as the Procurator would say.

MARY. No such thing, sir! I am not a bit afraid of you —nor a bit angry neither. Give me a kiss, and promise me hours and hours to-morrow morning.

BRODIE. All day long to-morrow, if you like.

MARY. Business or none?

BRODIE. Business or none, little sister! I'll make time, I promise you; and there's another kiss for surety. Come along. (*They proceed to push out the chair, L.C.*). The wine and wisdom of this evening have given me one of my headaches, and I'm in haste for bed. You'll be good, won't you, and see they make no noise, and let me sleep my fill to-morrow morning till I wake?

MARY. Poor Will! You should have told me sooner, and I wouldn't have worried you. Come along. (*Exeunt, pushing chair*).

SCENE VI

SMITH, *entering as they go out.*

SMITH. Your humble and most devoted servant, George Smith, Es-quire! And so this is the garding, is it? (*Looking round the room*). And this is the style of horticulture. And we has to wait in the passage, has we, while our friend and pitcher the Deacon's doing the gen-teel? And don't he do it, too! There's a deal of difference between this sort of thing and the way we does it in Libberton's Wynd. If our lovely and engaging friend, Mrs. J. Watt, could see what a flash companion her Deakin was in the bo-som of his family! (*Sees mirror*). Ha! it is! In that case George's mother bids him bind his hair. (*Arranges himself at mirror, to which he kisses his hand.*) Dear Duchess, come to your George's fond embrace! (*Sees the liquors*). Hey, brandy! The deuce of the grape. Most noble George, your health. Same to you, Dook. (*Sits. Feeling chair*). What brings the man from such purple splendiours to rot-gut and spittoons at Mother Clarke's? (*Helping*

himself again). Make yourself at home, George, if you please. It's a find old family inn, is Mother Clarke's; but ah! George, you was born for a higher spear, you was! Who can say my Lord George don't visit the best of company? Deacon, let me introduce you to my old and valued friend, the Fiscal. Bong-jour, Fiscal—as we say in France. You didn't expect to meet George S. in society; now, did you?

SCENE VII

BRODIE, SMITH

BRODIE. What the devil brings you here?

SMITH. *Con*found it, Deakin! Not rusty?

BRODIE. You've risked my neck—which is naturally of little consequence to you—and your own, too—which I presume is of some interest to you. And I see you're drinking. This won't be your first glass to-night?

SMITH. Why, you don't mean to say, Deakin, that you have been stodged by G. Smith, Esquire? Plummy old George?

BRODIE. There was my uncle the Procurator——

SMITH. The 'Fiscal? He don't count.

BRODIE. What d'ye mean?

SMITH. Well, Deakin, since 'Fiscal Lawson's Nunkey Lawson, and it's all in the family way, I don't mind telling you that Nunkey Lawson's a customer of George's. We give Nunkey Lawson a good deal of brandy—G. S. and Co's celebrated Nantz.

BRODIE. What! does he buy that smuggled trash of yours?

SMITH. Well, we don't exactly call it smuggled in the trade, Deakin. It's a wink, and King George's picter between G. S. and the Nunks.

BRODIE. Gad! that's worth knowing. O Procurator, Procurator, is there no such thing as virtue? *Allons!* It's enough to cure a man of vice for this world and the other.

But hark you hither, Smith; this is all damned well in its way, but it don't explain what brings you here.

SMITH. I've trapped a pigeon for you.

BRODIE. Can't you pluck him yourself?

SMITH. Not me. He's too flash in the feather for a simple nobleman like George, Lord Smith. It's the great Capting Starlight, fresh in from York. He's exercised his noble art all the way from here to Lundon. 'Stand and deliver, stap my vitals!' And the north road is no bad lay, Deakin!

BRODIE. Flush?

SMITH (*mimicking*). 'Three graziers, split me! A mail, stap my vitals! and seven demned farmers, by the Lard!'

BRODIE. By Gad!

SMITH. Good for trade, ain't it? And we thought, Deakin, the Badger and me, that coins being ever on the vanish, and you not over sweet on them there lovely little locks at the Excise Office?

BRODIE (*Impassible.*) Go on.

SMITH. Worse luck! We thought, me and the Badger, you know, that maybe you'd like to exercise your helbow with our free and galliant horseman.

BRODIE. The old move, I presume; the double set of dice?

SMITH. That's the rig, Deakin. What you drop on the square you pick up again on the cross. Just as you did with G. S. and Co's own agent and correspondent, the Admiral from Nantz. You always was a neat hand with the bones, Deakin.

BRODIE. The usual terms, I suppose?

SMITH. The old discount, Deakin. Ten in the pound for you, and the rest for your jolly companions every one. That's the way we does it!

BRODIE. Who has the dice?

SMITH. Our mutual friend, the Candleworm.

BRODIE. You mean Ainslie?—We trust that creature too much, Geordie.

SMITH. He's all right, Marquis. He wouldn't lay a finger on his own mother, much less on you. Why, he's no more guile in him than a set of sheep's trotters.

BRODIE. You think so? Then see he don't cheat you over the dice, and give you light for loaded. See to that, George, see to that; and you may count the Captain as bare as his last grazier.

SMITH. The Black Flag for ever! George'll trot him round to Mother Clarke's in two twos. How long'll you be?

BRODIE. The time to lock up and go to bed, and I'll be with you. Can you find your way out?

SMITH. Bloom on, my Sweet William, in peaceful array. Ta-ta.

SCENE VIII

BRODIE

(*He closes, locks, and double-bolts both doors.*)

BRODIE. Now for one of the Deacon's headaches! Rogues all, rogues all! (*Goes to clothes-press, and proceeds to change his coat.*) On with the new coat and into the new life! Down with the Deacon and up with the robber! (*Changing neck-band and ruffles.*) Eh, God! how still the house is! There's something in hypocrisy after all. If we were as good as we seem what would the world be? The city has its mask on, and we—at night we are our naked selves. Trysts are keeping, bottles are cracking, knives are stripping; and here is Deacon Brodie flaming forth the man he is!—How still it is! My father and Mary—well! the day for them, the night for me; the grimy cynical night that makes all cats grey, and all honesties of one complexion! Shall a man not have HALF a life of his own? Not eight hours out of twenty-four? Eight shall he have should he dare the pit of Tophet. (*Takes out money.*) Where's the blunt? I must be cool to-night, or steady, Deacon, you must win; damn you, you must! You must win back the dowry that you've stolen, marry your sister, pay your debts, and gull the world a little longer! Where's the sword? (*As he blows out the lights.*) The Deacon's going to bed—the

poor sick Deacon!—*Allons!* (*Throws up the window, and looks out.*) Only the stars to see me! (*Addressing the bed.*) Lie there, Deacon! sleep, and be well to-morrow. As for me, I'm a man once more till morning! (*Gets out of the window.*)

SCENE CLOSES.

TABLEAU II

HUNT THE RUNNER

The Stage represents the Procurator's Office

SCENE I

HUNT (*with papers.*)

HUNT. Two hundred pounds reward. Curious thing. One burglary after another and these Scotch blockheads without a man to show for it. Jock runs east, and Sawney runs west, everything's at a deadlock. And they go on calling themselves thief-catchers! By Jingo, I'll show them how we do it down South. Two hundred reward. Well, I've worn out a good deal of saddle leather over Jemmy Rivers, but here's for new breeches if you like. Let's have another queer at the list. (*Reads.*) 'Humphrey Moore, otherwise Badger; aged forty, thick set, dark, close-cropped, has been a prize-fighter; no apparent occupation.' Badger's an old friend of mine. 'George Smith, otherwise the Dook, otherwise Jingling Geordie; red-haired and curly, slight, flash; an old thimble-rig, has been a stroller, suspected of smuggling, an associate of loose women.' G. S., Esquire, is another of my flock. 'Andrew Ainslie, otherwise Slink Ainslie; aged thirty-five; thin, white-faced, lank-haired, no occupation; has been in trouble for reset of theft and subornation of youth; might be useful as king's evidence.' That's an acquaintance to make. 'Jock Hamilton, otherwise Sweepie, and so on. 'Willie M'Glashan,' hum—yes, and so on—and so on. Ha,

here's the man I want. 'William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights, about thirty, tall, slim, dark; wears his own hair; has acquaintance with one Jean Watt, a woman of bad reputation living in Libberton's Wynd; is often at Clarke's, but seemingly for purposes of amusement only; is nephew to the Procurator-Fiscal; is commercially sound, but has of late (it is supposed) been short of cash; has lost much at cock-fighting; is proud, clever, of good repute, but is fond of adventures and secrecy, and keeps low company.' Now here's what I ask myself: here's this list of the family party that drop into Mother Clarke's; it's been in the hands of these nincompoops for weeks, and I'm the first to cry Queer Street! Two well-known cracksmen, Badger and the Dook —why, there's Jack in the Orchard at once. This here top-sawyer work they talk about, of course that's a chalk above Badger and the Dook. But how about our Mohock-tradesman? 'Purposes of amusement!' What next! Deacon of the Wrights, and wright in their damned lingo means a kind of carpenter, I fancy! Why, damme, it's the man's trade! I'll look you up, Mr. William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights. As sure as my name's Jerry Hunt, I wouldn't take one-ninety-nine in gold for my chance of that 'ere two hundred!

SCENE II

HUNT, LAWSON

LAWSON. You'll be the runner from Bow Street.

HUNT. Hunt the runner, sir! Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, I believe?

LAWSON. That's me. What'll ye be wanting?

HUNT. I must apologise for a late visit, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal; but I've an English warrant for the apprehension of Jemmy Rivers, alias Captain Starlight, now at large within your jurisdiction.

LAWSON. That'll be the highwayman?

HUNT. That same, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal. The Cap-

tain's given me a hard burst of it this time. I dropped on his marks first at Huntingdon, but he was away north, and I had to up and after him. I heard of him all along the York Road, for he's a light hand on the pad, has Jemmy, and leaves his mark. I missed him at York by four-and-twenty hours, and lost sight for as much more. Then I picked him up again at Carlisle, and we made a race of it for the Border, but he'd a better nag and was best up in the road. So I had to wait till I ran him to earth in Edinburgh here, and could get a new warrant. So here I am, sir. They told me you was an active sort of gentleman, and I'm an active man myself.

LAWSON. Ay, ay, Hunt! Like draws to like, ye ken. Hand me owre your papers, and you'll have your new warrant *quam primum*. And see here, Hunt, ye'll aiblins have a while to yoursel', and an active man, as ye say ye are, should aye be grinding griet. We're sore forfeuchin wi' our burglaries. *Non constat de personâ*. We canna get a grip o' the delinquents.

HUNT. I've had a worry at it already, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal—in my mind, you know. Two hundred's two hundred. I've to look into a ken to-night about the Captain, and I'll see if I can't kill two birds with one stone. I've a bit of a guess ready made—but we'll talk of that, your honour, when I come back for the warrant.

LAWSON. Ye're verra right, Hunt. An active and a silent officer. (*Dismissing him.*)

HUNT. (*saluting*). Thank *you*, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal.

SCENE CLOSES.

TABLEAU III

Mother Clarke's

SCENE I

The stage represents a room of coarse and sordid appearance, settles, spittoons, etc.; sanded floor. A large table at back, where Ainslie, Hamilton, *and others, are playing cards and quarrelling. In front, L. and R., smaller tables, at one of which* Brodie *and* Moore, *drinking.* Mrs. Clarke *and women serving.*

Moore. You've got the devil's own luck, Deacon, that's what you've got.

Brodie. Luck! Don't talk of luck to a man like me! Why not say I've the devil's own judgment? Men of my stamp don't risk, they plan, Badger, they plan, and leave chance to such cattle as you, and Jingling Geordie. They make opportunities before they take them.

Moore. You're artful, ain't you!

Brodie. Should I be here else? When I leave my house I leave an alibi behind me. I'm ill—ill—with a jumping headache and the fiend's own temper. I'm sick in bed this minute, and they're all going about with the fear of death on them lest they should disturb the poor sick Deacon. My bedroom door is barred and bolted like the Bank—you remember!—and all the while the window's open, and the Deacon's over the hills and far away. What do you think of me?

Moore. I've seen your sort before, I have.

Brodie. Not you. As for Leslie's——

Moore. That was a nick above you.

Brodie. *That* was an accident. Who can guard against accidents! I schemed it all out months ago, and knew my ground like a pack of cards. Six nights back I settled on the job. My dear friend Walter said he was riding out to Queensberry, and I made as sure of his guineas as if they were hugging in my own pocket. It was an easy business so far, and I enjoyed it;—Lord! how I did enjoy it. We

had dined together that morning,—think of that, Badger, think of that!—and I felt like a man in a story. I climbed my dear friend Walter's wall, I crawled along his pantry-roof, I mounted his window-sill. It was like keeping tryst again with the Major's wife, only better, and more dangerous. That one turn of my wrist,—you know it!—and the window was open. It was as dark as the pit, and I thought myself within an ace of being a happy man. When, phewt! down went something inside, and down went somebody with it. I made one jump and went off like a rocket. Of course it was my dear friend Walter himself.

MOORE. I s'pose he knows you pretty well by this time?

BRODIE. 'Tis the worst of friendship. Here, Christy, fill these glasses here. Moore, here's better luck next time!

MOORE. Deacon, I looks towards you. But it looks thundering rotten eggs, don't it?

BRODIE. 'O why these doleful doubts, my Badger, say!' Why, man, he came at me like a bull,—all rush and no eye. He did me the honour of driving with me this evening. I tried to trot him out, but he kept his tongue in his teeth, and played close. There may be mischief in the wind; but what of it! I've always my alibi, and I've not done with Walter yet. It's a point of honour with me not to fail, it's a point of honour never to desert my friends. You all see I'm bound to have him. It would be unprincipled to let him go.

SCENE II

To these HUNT, *disguised*

He is disguised as a "flying stationer," with a patch over his eye. He sits at table opposite BRODIE'S, *and is served with bread and cheese and beer.*

HAMILTON (*from behind*). The devil take the cards.

AINSLIE. Hoot, man, dinna blame the cards!

MOORE. Look here, Deacon, I mean business, I do. (HUNT *looks up at the name of* '*Deacon.*')

BRODIE. Gad, Badger, I never met you that you do not. You have a set of the most commercial intentions! You make me blush.

MOORE. That's all blazing fine, that is. But what I ses is, what about the chips? That's what I ses. I'm after that thundering old Excise Office, I am. That's my motto.

BRODIE. 'Tis a very good motto, and at your lips, Badger, it kind of warms my heart. But it's not mine.

MOORE. Muck! why not?

BRODIE. 'Tis too big and too dangerous. I shirk King George; he has a fat pocket, but he has a long arm. You pilfer sixpence from him, and it's three hundred reward for you, and a hue and cry from Tophet to the stars. It ceases to be business; it turns politics, and I'm not a politician, Mr. Moore. (*Rising.*) I'm only Deacon Brodie.

MOORE. All right, I can wait.

BRODIE (*seeing* HUNT). Ha, a new face,—and with a patch! There's nothing under heaven I like so dearly as a new face with a patch. Who the devil, sir, are you that own it? And where did you get it? And how much will you take for it second-hand?

HUNT. Well, sir, to tell you the truth—(*Brodie bows*), it's not for sale. But it's my own, and I'll drink your honour's health in anything.

BRODIE. An Englishman too! Badger, behold a countryman. What are you, and what part of southern Scotland do you come from?

HUNT. Well, your honour, to tell you the honest truth——

BRODIE (*bowing*). Your obleeged!——

HUNT. I knows a gentleman when I sees him, your honour, and to tell your honour the truth——

BRODIE. *Je vous baise les mains!*—(*Bowing.*)

HUNT. A gentleman as is a gentleman, your honour, is always a gentleman, and to tell you the honest truth——

BRODIE. Great heavens! answer in three words, and be hanged to you. What are you, and where are you from?

HUNT. A patter-cove, from Sevin Dials.

BRODIE. Is it possible? All my life-long have I been pining to meet with a patter-cove from Seven Dials! Embrace me—at a distance. A patter-cove from Seven Dials! Go, fill yourself as drunk as you dare; at my expense. Anything he likes, Mrs. Clarke! He's a patter-cove from Seven Dials. Hillo! what's all this?

AINSLIE. Dod, I'm for nae mair! (*At back, and rising.*)

PLAYERS. 'Sit down, Ainslie.'—'Sit down, Andra.'—'Ma revenge!'

AINSLIE. Na, na, I'm for canny goin'. (*Coming forward with bottle.*) Deacon, let's see your gless.

BRODIE. Not an inch of it.

MOORE. No rotten shirking, Deacon!

AINSLIE. I'm sayin', man, let's see your gless.

BRODIE. Go to the deuce!

AINSLIE. But I'm sayin'——

BRODIE. Haven't I to throw a main to-night?

AINSLIE. But, man, ye'll drink to bonnie Jean Watt?

BRODIE. Ay, I'll follow you there. *À la reine des mes amours!* (*Drinks.*) What fiend put this in your way, you hound? You've filled me with raw stuff. By the muckle deil!——

MOORE. Don't hit him, Deacon; tell his mother.

HUNT. (*aside*). Oho!

SCENE III

To these, SMITH, RIVERS

SMITH. Where's my beloved? Deakin, my beauty, where are you? Come to the arms of George, and let him introduce you. Capting Starlight Rivers! Capting, the Deakin. Deakin, the Capting. An English nobleman on the grand tour: to open his mind, by the lard!

RIVERS. Stupendously pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Deakin, split me!

BRODIE. We don't often see England's heroes our way,

Captain, but when we do, we make them infernally welcome.

Rivers. Prettily put, sink me! A demned genteel sentiment, stap my vitals!

Brodie. O Captain! you flatter me. We Scotsmen have our qualities, I suppose, but we are but rough and ready at the best. There's nothing like your Englishman for genuine distinction. He is nearer France than we are, and smells of his neighbourhood. That d——d thing, the *je ne sais quoi*, is blown direct to him across the Straits. We only catch faint airs of it,—airs that have passed, too, over Lincoln ferns, and Yorkshire moors, and Northumberland sea-coal, and the hags and hills of the Debatable Land. Polish with us must be an affectation or an effort. The Starlights of the world to us are admirable merely; inimitable they are not. They have an air, a grace, a manner—that d——d thing, the *je ne sais quoi*, too!—Lard, lard; split me! stap my vitals! O such manners are pure—pure—pure. They are, by the shade of Claude Duval.

Rivers. Mr. Deakin, Mr. Deakin, this is passitively too much. What will you sip? Give it the *h*anar of a neam.

Brodie. By these most hanarable hands now, Captain, you shall not. On such an occasion I could play host with Lucifer himself. Here, Clarke, Mother Midnight! Down with you, Captain! (*forcing him boisterously into a chair.*) I don't know if you can lie, but, sink me! you shall sit. *Drinking, etc., in dumb-show.*

Moore (*aside to* Smith). We've nobbled him, Geordie!

Smith (*aside to* Moore). As neat as ninepence! He's taking it down like mother's milk. But there'll be wigs on the green to-morrow, Badger! It'll be tuppence and toddle with George Smith.

Moore. O muck! Who's afraid of him? (*To* Ainslie.) Hang on, Slinkie.

Hunt (*who is feigning drunkenness, and has overheard; aside*). By Jingo!

Rivers. Will you sneeze, Mr. Deakin, sir?

BRODIE. Thanks! I have all the vices, Captain. You must send me some of your Rappee. It is passatively perfect.

RIVERS. Mr. Deakin, I do myself the *h*anar of a sip to you.

BRODIE. Topsy-turvy with the can!

MOORE (*aside to* SMITH). That made him wink.

BRODIE. Your high and mighty hand, my Captain! Shall we dice—dice—dice? (*Dumb show between them*).

AINSLIE (*aside to* MOORE). I'm sayin'——

MOORE. What's up now?

AINSLIE. I'm no to gie him the coggit dice?

MOORE. The square ones, rot you! Ain't he got to lose every brass farden?

AINSLIE. What'll be my share?

MOORE. You mucking well leave that to me.

Aside

RIVERS. Well, Mr. Deakin, if you passatively will have me shake a *h*elbow.

BRODIE. Where are the bones, Ainslie? Where are the dice, Lord George? (AINSLIE *gives the dice and dice-box to* BRODIE; *and privately a second pair of dice.*) Old Fortune's counters the bonnie money-catching, money-breeding bones! Hark to their dry music! Scotland against England! Sit round, you tame devils, and put your coins on me!

SMITH. Easy does it, my lord of high degree! Keep cool!

BRODIE. Cool's the word. Captain, a cool twenty on the first?

RIVERS. Done and done. (*They play.*)

HUNT (*aside to* MOORE—*a little drunk.*) Ain't that 'ere Scotch gentleman, your friend, too drunk to play, sir?

MOORE. You hold your jaw, that's what's the matter with you.

AINSLIE. He's waur nor he looks. He's knockit the box aff the table.

SMITH (*picking up box*). That's the way *we* does it. Ten to one and no takers!

BRODIE. Deuces again! More liquor, Mother Clarke!

SMITH. Hooray our side! (*pouring out*). George and his pal for ever!

BRODIE. Deuces again, by heaven! Another?

RIVERS. Done!

BRODIE. Ten more. Money's made to go. On with you!

RIVERS. Sixes.

BRODIE. Deuce-ace. Death and judgment. Double or quits?

RIVERS. Drive on!—Sixes.

SMITH. Fire away, brave boys! (*To* MOORE.) It's Tully-ho the Grinder, Hump!

BRODIE. Treys! Death and the pit! How much have you got there?

RIVERS. A cool forty-five.

BRODIE. I play you thrice the lot.

RIVERS. Who's afraid?

SMITH. Stand by, Badger!

RIVERS. Cinq-ace.

BRODIE. My turn now. (*He juggles in and uses the second pair of dice.*) Aces. Aces again! What's this? (*Picking up dice.*) Sold! You play false, you hound!

RIVERS. You lie!

BRODIE. In your teeth. (*Overturns table, and goes for him.*)

MOORE. Here, none o' that! } (*They hold him back—*
SMITH. Hold on, Deacon! } *struggle.*)

BRODIE. Let me go. Hands off, I say! I'll not touch him. (*Stands weighing dice in his hand.*) But as for that thieving whinger, Ainslie, I'll cut his throat between this dark and to-morrow's. To the bone. (*Addressing the company.*) Rogues—rogues—rogues! (*Singing without.*) Ha! what's that?

AINSLIE. It's the psalm-singing up by, at the Holy Weaver's. And oh! Deacon, if ye're a Christian man——

THE PSALM WITHOUT

'Lord, who shall stand, if Thou, O Lord,
Should'st mark iniquity;
But yet with Thee forgiveness is
That fearèd Thou may'st be.'

BRODIE. I think I'll go. 'My son, the Deacon, was aye regular at kirk.' If the old man could see his son, the Deacon! I think I'll—— Ay, who *shall* stand? There's the rub! And forgiveness, too? There's a long word for you! I learnt it all lang syne, and now . . . hell and ruin are on either hand of me, and the devil has me by the leg. 'My son, the Deacon——' Eh God! but there's no fool like an old fool! (*Becoming conscious of the others.*) Rogues!

SMITH. Take my arm, Deacon.

BRODIE. Down, dog, down! Stay and be drunk with your equals. Gentlemen—and ladies—I have already cursed you pretty heartily. Let me do myself the pleasure of wishing you—a very—good evening. (*As he goes out* HUNT, *who has been staggering about in the crowd, falls on a settle, as though about to sleep.*)

ACT-DROP

ACT II

Tableau IV

EVIL AND GOOD

The Stage represents the Deacon's Bedroom, as in I. 1.

SCENE I

Brodie, *a Workman* (*carpenter*), *with mouldings, etc.*

Brodie (*with foot-rule*). Give them another inch; say seven and a sixteenth. A plain rabbit. There, take it away, It'll do. (*Exit Workman.*) God, how my head aches! (*calling off at wing.*) Oh!—and don't forget the cabinet for Dr. Carfrae. And if the wood-merchant calls about that bill, say I'll see about it to-morrow, or next day. (*Speaking.*) Now then, Deacon, boot and saddle! The ground's too hot for me within twenty miles of Mary! (*Calling off.*) If Miss Mary asks for me, say I'm off to Cramond on business; for the day, mind. (*Speaking.*) O, the Deacon, the Deacon! Where's a hat for the Deacon? Where's a hat for the Deacon's headache? This place is a piggery. To be respectable and not to find one's hat!

Lawson (*without*). I ken the way, I ken the way.

Brodie. My friend George's friend? I can manage him.

SCENE II

Brodie, Lawson

Lawson. A braw day this, for the time o' the year, William.

Brodie. I'm no judge, Procurator, but I'll take your word for it.

LAWSON. I had a crack wi' the laddie Leslie, *inter pocula* (he took a stirrup-cup wi' me), and he tells me he has askit Mary, and she was to speak to ye hersel'. O, ye needna look sae gash. Did she speak? and what'll you have said to her?

BRODIE. She has not spoken; I have said nothing; and I believe I asked you to avoid the subject.

LAWSON. Ay, I made *avizandum* o' that observation, William, and assoilzied mysel'. Mary's a guid lass, and I'm her oe, and I'm here to be answered. Is it to be ay or no?

BRODIE. It's to be no. This marriage must be quashed; and hark ye, Procurator, you must help me.

LAWSON. Me? ye're daft! And what for why?

BRODIE. Because I've spent the trust-money, and I can't refund it.

LAWSON. Ye reprobate deevil.

BRODIE. Have a care, Procurator. No wry words!

LAWSON. Do you say it to my face, sir? Dod, sir, I'm the Crown Prosecutor.

BRODIE. Right. The Prosecutor for the Crown. And where do you get your brandy?

LAWSON. Eh!

BRODIE. Your brandy! Your brandy, man! Where do you get your brandy? And you a Crown offeecial and an elder.

LAWSON. Whaur the deevil did ye hear that?

BRODIE. Rogues all! Rogues all, Procurator! 'Tis the last word of my philosophy, and it will soon be yours.

LAWSON. Lord save us! Guid sake, to think o' that noo! Can ye give me some o' that Cognac?—I'm—I'm sort o' shaken, William, I'm sort o' shaken—Thank you, William! (*Looking piteously at glass.*) *Nunc est bibendum.* (*Drinks.*) Troth, I'm a set ajee a bit.—Wha the deevil tauld ye?

BRODIE. Ask no questions, brother. We are a pair.

LAWSON. Pair, indeed! Pair, William Brodie? Upon my saul, sir, ye're a brazen-faced man that durst say it to my face! Tak' you care, my bonnie young man, that your craig doesna feel the wecht o' your hurdies. Keep the plain-

stanes side o' the wuddie. *Via trita, via tuta*, William Brodie!

BRODIE. And the brandy, Procurator? and the brandy?

LAWSON. Ay—weel—be't sae—Let the brandy bide, man, let the brandy bide! But for you and the trust-money—Damned! It's felony. *Tutor in rem suam*, ye ken, *tutor in rem suam*. But, O man Deacon, whaur *is* the siller?

BRODIE. It's gone—O, how the devil should I know? But it'll never come back.

LAWSON. Dear, dear! A' gone to the winds o' heaven! Sae ye're an extravagant dog, too. *Prodigus et furiosus!* And that puir lass—eh Deacon man, that puir lass! I mind her such a bonny bairn.

BRODIE (*stopping his ears*). Brandy, brandy, brandy, brandy, brandy!

LAWSON. William Brodie, mony's the lang day that I've believed in you; prood, prood was I to be the Deacon's uncle; and a sore hearing I have had of it the morn. That's past; that's past like Flodden Field; it's an auld sang noo, and I'm an aulder man than when I crossed your door. But mark ye this—mark ye this, William Brodie, I maybe no sae guid's I should be; but there's no a saul between the east sea and the wast can lift his een to God that made him, and say I wranged him as ye wrang that lassie. I bless God, William Brodie—ay, tho' he was like my brother—I bless God that he that got ye has the hand of death upon his hearing, and can win into his grave a happier man than me. And ye speak to me, sir? Think shame—think shame upon your heart!

BRODIE. Rogues all!

LAWSON. You're the son of my sister, William Brodie. Mair than that I stop not to inquire. If the siller is spent, and the honour tint—Lord, help us, and the honour tint—sae be it, I maun bow the head. Ruin shallna come by me. Na, and I'll say mair, William; we have a' our weary sins upon our backs; and maybe I have mair than mony. But, man, if ye could bring *half* the jointure—*potius quam pereas* for your mither's son—Na? You couldna bring the half?

Weel, weel, it's a sair heart I have this day, a sair heart and a weary. If I were a better man mysel'—but there, there, it's a sair heart that I have gotten. And the Lord kens I'll help ye if I can. *Potius quam pereas.*

SCENE III

Brodie. Sore hearing, does he say? My hand's wet—But it's victory—shall it be go? or stay? I should show them all I can, or they may pry closer than they ought. Shall I have it out and be done with it? To see Mary at once, to carry bastion after bastion at the charge—there were the true safety after all! Hurry—hurry's the road to silence now. Let them once get tattling in their parlours, and it's death to me. For I'm in a cruel corner now. I'm down, and I shall get my kicking soon and soon enough. I began it in the lust of life, in a hey-day of mystery and adventure. I felt it great to be a bolder, craftier rogue than the drowsy citizen that called himself my fellow-man. It was meat and drink to know him in the hollow of my hand, hoarding that I and mine might squander, pinching that we might wax fat. It was in the laughter of my heart that I tip-toed into his greasy privacy. I forced the strong-box at his ear while he sprawled beside his wife. He was my butt, my ape, my jumping-jack.—And now—O fool, fool. Duped by such knaves as are a shame to knavery, crime's rabble, hell's tatterdemalions! Shorn to the quick! Rooked to my vitals! And I must thieve for my daily bread like any crawling blackguard in the gutter. And my sister—there's where it pricks! It wouldn't greatly matter if she were no better than myself. But no, damn her, not she! And yet—and yet—if we were all a bit alike—why, there's what I would call a family. She would be just as happy—look at me! And one more light woman——

SCENE IV

BRODIE, MARY

MARY (*tapping without*). Can I come in, Will?

BRODIE. O yes, come in—come in! (MARY *enters.*) I wanted to be quiet, but it doesn't matter, I see. You women are all the same.

MARY. O no, Will, they're not all so happy, and they're not all Brodies. But I'll be a woman in one thing. For I've come to claim your promise, dear; and I'm going to be petted and comforted and made much of, altho' I don't need it, and—Why, Will, what's wrong with you? You look—I don't know what you look like.

BRODIE. O, nothing! A splitting head and an aching heart. Well! you've come to speak to me. Speak up. What is it?—Come, girl! What is it? Can't you speak?

MARY. Why, Will, what is the matter?

BRODIE. I thought you had come to tell me something. Here I am.—For God's sake, out with it, and don't stand beating about the bush.

MARY. O be kind, be kind to me.

BRODIE. Kind? I am kind. I'm only ill and worried, can't you see? Whimpering? I knew it! Sit down, you goose! Where do you women get your tears!

MARY. Why are you so cross with me? O Will, you have forgot your sister! Remember, dear, that I have nobody but you. It's your own fault, Will, if you've taught me to come to you for kindness, for I always found it. And I mean you shall be kind to me again. I know you will, for this is my great need, and the day I've missed my mother sorest. Just a nice look, dear, and a soft tone in your voice, to give me courage, for I can tell you nothing till I know that you're my own brother once again.

BRODIE. If you'd take a hint, you'd put it off till to-morrow. But I suppose you won't. On, then! I'm listening. I'm listening!

MARY. Mr. Leslie has asked me to be his wife.

BRODIE. He has, has he?

MARY. And I have consented.

BRODIE. And?

MARY. You can say that to me? And that is all you have to say?

BRODIE. O no, not all.

MARY. Speak out, sir. I am not afraid.

BRODIE. I suppose you want my consent?

MARY. Can you ask?

BRODIE. I didn't know. You seem to have got on pretty well without it so far.

MARY. O shame on you! shame on you!

BRODIE. Perhaps you may be able to do without it altogether. I hope so. For you'll never have it, Mary. I hate to see you look like that, Mary. If I could say anything else, believe me I would say it. But I have said all; every word is spoken; there's the end.

MARY. It shall not be the end. You owe me an explanation, and I'll have it.

BRODIE. Isn't my 'No' enough, Mary?

MARY. It might be enough for me. But it is not, and it cannot be, enough for him. He has asked me to be his wife; he tells me his happiness is in my hands; poor hands—but they shall not fail him, if my heart should break. If he has chosen and set his hopes upon me, of all women in the world, I shall find courage somewhere to be worthy of the choice. And I dare you to leave this room until you tell me all your thoughts—until you prove that this is good and right.

BRODIE. Good and right? They are strange words, Mary.—I mind the time when it was good and right to be your father's daughter and your brother's sister. Now!

MARY. Have I changed? Not even in thought. My father, Walter says, shall live and die with us;—he shall only have gained another son. And you—you know what he thinks of you; you know what I would do for you.

BRODIE. Give him up.

MARY. I have told you—not without a reason.

BRODIE. You must.

MARY. I will not.

BRODIE. So much for the sister!—Mary, there must be no illusions left between us. You have begun upon this, and I must go through with it. You say you will not give him up?

MARY. I will not.

BRODIE. What if I told you that you could only compass your happiness, and his, at the price of my ruin?

MARY. Your ruin?

BRODIE. Even so. Ruin.

MARY. Ruin!

BRODIE. It has an ugly sound, has it not?

MARY. O Willie! what have you done? What have you done? What have you done?

BRODIE. I cannot tell you, Mary. But you may trust me. You must give up this Leslie and at once. It is to save me. And now go—for God's sake, go. Let me take you to your room. Come.

He leads her out by the side door. Enter MOORE *and* SMITH, *C.*

SCENE V

MOORE, SMITH, BRODIE

BRODIE (*returning*). What brings you here?

SMITH. Deakin, my rose of Sharon! . . .

BRODIE. And where is the other thief?

SMITH. Slink Ainslie, Deakin, is rehearsing for his epitaph. He was took ill at Mother C.'s.,—three doctors and a 'pothecary's shop. Unless he gets your pardin, Deakin, it's going to be a case of sacred to the memory. I shall go and pal on with the undertakers myself.

MOORE. Look 'ere, Deacon! What's up? That's my motto. What I ses is, if a cove's got any thundering grudge agin a cove, why can't he spit it out, I ses.

BRODIE. I accept your invitation. Here are my answers. (*Producing purse and dice.*) These are both too light. This purse is empty, these dice are not loaded. Is it indiscretion to inquire how you share? Equal with the Captain, I presume?

SMITH. It's as easy as my eye, Deakin. Slink Ainslie got letting the merry glass go round, and didn't know the right bones from the wrong. That's *h*all.

BRODIE. What clumsy liars you are!

SMITH. In boyhood's hour, Deakin, he were called Old Truthful. Little did he think——

BRODIE. My time is precious. What is your errand?

MOORE. Business.

SMITH. After the melancholy games of last night, Deakin, which no one deplores so much as George Smith, we thought we'd trot round—didn't us, Hump?—and see how you and your bankers was a getting on.

BRODIE. Will you tell me your errand?

MOORE. You're dry, ain't you?

BRODIE. Am I?

MOORE. We ain't none of us got a stiver, that's the matter with us.

BRODIE. Is it?

MOORE. Ay, strike me blind, it is. And what we've got to is to put up the rotten old Excise.

SMITH. It's the last plant in the shrubbery, Deakin, and it's breaking George the gardener's heart, it is. We really must!

BRODIE. Must we?

MOORE. Must's the thundering word. I mean business, I do.

BRODIE. That's lucky. I don't.

MOORE. Oh! you don't, don't you?

BRODIE. I do not.

MOORE. Then p'raps you'll tell us what you mucking well do?

BRODIE. What do I mean? I mean that you and that merry-andrew shall walk out of this room and this house.

Do you suppose, you blockheads, that I'm blind. I'm the Deacon, am I not? I've been your king and your commander. I've led you, and fed you, and thought for you with this head. And you think to steal a march upon a man like me? I see you through and through; I know you like the clock; I read your thoughts like print. Brodie, you thought, has money, and won't do the job. Therefore, you thought, we must rook him to the heart. And therefore, you put up your idiot cockney! And now—you come round, and dictate, and think sure of your Excise? Sure? Are you sure I'll let you pack with a whole skin? By my soul, but I've a mind to pistol you like dogs. Out of this! Out, I say, and soil my home no more!

Moore (*sitting*). Now look 'ere, Mr. bloody Deacon Brodie, you see this 'ere chair of yours, don't you? What I ses to you is, here I am, I ses, and here I mean to stick. That's my motto. Who the devil are you to do the high and mighty? You make all you can out of us, don't you? and when one of your plants goes cross, you order us out of the ken? Muck! That's what I think of you. Muck! Don't you get coming the nob over me, Mr. Deacon Brodie, or I'll smash you.

Brodie. You will?

Moore. Ay, will I. If I thundering well swing for it. And as for clearing out,—muck! Here I am, and here I stick. Clear out? You try it on. I'm a man, I am.

Smith (*after a pause*). Look here, Badger, you're not going to carry on like this with a pal of George's. Do you mind the happy night when you was shot? What would your aged mother have done if G. S. hadn't shouldered you and padded the hoof for Libberton's Wynd?

Moore. That's all right enough. But what of it? I ain't so rotten as all that, I ain't. I'm that cove's master, and here I sticks.

Smith. These sentiments, Hump, do equal honour to your heart and head. But what's that got to do with last year's almanac? Is G. S. your old particular, or ain't he?

Moore. O rot.

SMITH. You touch me deeply, Humpy. Hump, you are a most noble being. In that chair you look like a jolly old Greek hemperor. Come out of it, there's my honourable and gallient friend, and shake hands with the Deacon like a Trojan.

MOORE. Not me. Not till he's axed pardon.

SMITH. O, come now, Badger, this sort of thing ain't quite the mark.

MOORE. Muck! That's my motto.

BRODIE. I spoke hastily, Moore. Will you shake hands on it?

MOORE. It ain't much in my line. (*They shake hands.*)

SMITH. Portrait of George as a guardian hangel!

BRODIE. Smith, I am obliged to you. You have behaved like a good fellow.

SMITH. Deakin, you see before you about the stodgedest gent as ever was.

BRODIE. Have you anything more to say to me just now? I am really very busy. But you may command me presently.

MOORE. No more nonsense, mind!

BRODIE. No more nonsense. Where shall I wait upon you?

MOORE. What about that woman's place of yours?

BRODIE. I shall try to make you welcome. At what hour may we expect you? Shall we say two?

MOORE. That's good enough. Come along, George.

SMITH. Bye-bye, William. Don't forget.

SCENE VI

BRODIE

BRODIE. Trust me. No man forgets his vice, you dogs—or forgives it either. It must be done; Leslie's to-night, and the Excise to-morrow. It shall be done. This settles it. They used to fetch and carry for me, and now! I've licked their boots, have I? I'm their man, their tool, their chattel.

It's the bottom rung of the ladder of shame. I sound with my foot, and there's nothing underneath but the black emptiness of damnation. Ah, Deacon, Deacon, and so this is where you've been travelling all these years; and it's for this that you learned French! The gallows—God help me, it begins to dog me like my shadow. *There's* a step to take! And the jerk upon your spine! How's a man to die with a night-cap on?—I've done with this. Over yonder, across the great ocean, is a new land, with new characters, and perhaps new lives. The sun shines, and the bells ring, and it's a place where men live gladly; and the Deacon himself can walk without terror and begin again like a new-born child. It must be good to see day and not to fear; it must be good to be oneself with all men. Happy like a child, wise like a man, free like God's angels—should I work these hands off and eat crusts, there were a life to make me young and good again. And it's only over the sea! Oh, man, you have been blind, and now your eyes are opened. It was half a life's nightmare, and now you are awake. Up, Deacon, up! it's hope that's at the window! Mary! Mary! Mary!

SCENE VII

BRODIE, MARY, OLD BRODIE

(BRODIE *has fallen into a chair, with his face upon the table. Enter* MARY *by the side door, pushing her father's chair. She is supposed to have advanced far enough for stage purposes before* BRODIE *is aware of her. He starts up, and runs to her.*)

BRODIE. Look up, my lass—look up, and be a woman! I—O kiss me, Mary, give me a kiss for my good news.

MARY. Good news, Will? Is it changed?

BRODIE. Changed? Why, the world's a different colour! It was night, and now it's broad day, and I trust myself again. You must wait, dear, wait, and I must work and

work; and before the week is out, as sure as God sees me, I'll have made you happy.—O, you may think me broken, hounds, but the Deacon's not the man to be run down; trust him, he shall turn a corner yet, and leave you snarling!—And you, Poll—you. I've done nothing for you yet; but, please God, I'll make your life a life of gold; and wherever I am, I'll have a part in your happiness, and you'll know it, by heaven! and bless me.

MARY. O, Willie—look at him. I think he hears you, and is trying to be glad with us.

OLD BRODIE. My son—Deacon—better man than I was.

BRODIE. O, for God's sake, hear him.

MARY. He is quite happy, Will, and so am I—so am I.

BRODIE. Hear me, Mary. This is a big moment in our two lives. I swear to you by the father here between us, that it shall not be fault of mine if this thing fails—if this ship founders you have set your hopes in! I swear it by our father—I swear it by God's judgments.

MARY. I want no oaths, Will.

BRODIE. No, but I do. And prayers, Mary, prayers. Pray night and day upon your knees. I must move mountains.

OLD BRODIE. A wise son maketh—maketh——

BRODIE. A glad father? And does your son the Deacon make you glad? O heaven of heavens, if I were a good man.

ACT-DROP

ACT III

Face to Face

Tableau V

Jean Watt

The stage represents the interior of Jean Watt's *lodging in Libberton's Wynd. Kitchen-fire, bed, etc.* Brodie, Jean Watt, *and children at supper-table.*

SCENE I

Brodie, Jean, Children

Brodie. Every guinea, Jean, every mortal guinea in the world. They were all at it—every thieving mother's son of them.

Jean. I knew. Mrs. Hamilton tauld me. Her man was doon at Clarke's yestreen; an' they a' gaed shares wi' the Englishman.

Brodie. I'll be even with them yet; they've not seen the last of Deacon Brodie. I had better given it you, Jean.

Jean. Ay, had ye. There's the rent no paid—ha'e chuckie, eat a bit o' that!—Man, Will, I wish ye wad gi'e me mair siller, or mair at a time. It's just a pickle here an' a pickle thonder; an' a pickle's sune awa'.

Brodie. Ah, Jean, if you knew all, if you knew all!

Jean. I ken fine. Ye're thinkin' o' your faither an' your bonnie tittie, man—no o' me and the weans. They're your ain, Weeliam Brodie, though I say it that shouldnae; an' they're mines forebye, an' I'll no thole to see them wranged.

Brodie. Ay? Are you a good mother? Woman, but you make me wonder.

Jean. What do ye wonder, man?

Brodie. Are you true to me, Jean?

Jean. Ye ken that weel aneuch. Ye ken't as weel as I dae. I've been aye leal an' true to ye, an' that's mair nor mony o' my likes could say.

BRODIE. Is it, Jean? I suppose it is. I suppose it is. But I wonder—I wonder—I wonder.

THE YOUNGEST CHILD (*singing*). My faither's a Deacon, a Deacon, a Deacon!

JEAN. Wheest, ye fool-mooth'd wee deevil!

BRODIE. Don't hurt him, Jean! Don't hurt him. Come here, my fine man! Come to your daddie! Come to your daddie then. There—that's it! Your father's not all you'd like him to be, my pet lamb; though he is, as you say, a deacon; and a very fine specimen of the deacon he is!—And is this the way you hide me, Jean? 'My father's a Deacon,' is he? Is this the way you treat me?

JEAN. I treat you? Losh me, it's nae faut o' mine's. The neebors but to speak, ye ken, or they wadna be neebors; an' the weans, they pick it up; an' what can I dae? The ither bairns kist me up to them, an' they but to brag o' your being a Deacon, innocent lambs! Mony's the skelp I gi'e them; but what wad ye hae?—it's nature—an' you a Deacon, ye ken.

BRODIE. It's a rare brag. Isn't it, my bonny boy? (*Playing with child's hand*).

> This is the man that broke the barn,
> This is the man that stole the corn,
> This is the man that ran awa,'
> This is the man that tel't it a',

and this is wee Pirliewinkie that couldna get doon the brae and had to pay for a'.

(*Kisses and daudles him*). Isn't that a fine song? Put him to bed, Jean. What, he doesn't want? Then he shan't. He shall do as he likes while I'm here, that he shall!—Is that not a fine song? And it's all in the way of trade, too, isn't it? (*Puts the child away*). Jean, my woman, it's but a mockery of a life, this. Will you help me to a new?

JEAN. A new yin? What ails ye at the auld? Ye used to like it fine.

BRODIE. What ails me? Everything. I'm sick of it. Sick of being a hypocrite at home and a blackguard abroad!

Sick of wearing two faces and living two lives! Sick of the evening's riot and the morning's shame! Sick of the whole canting, lying, cogging, beastly business! I'm not even first among the vagabonds I herd with; they despise me and cheat me; I'm their flunkey and their gull. And you ask me what ails me? I hate it—O God, how I hate it! and O God, how I hate myself!—But it's darkest before dawn. Have you the heart to follow, and the courage to help me, Jean? I risk a brace of big strokes to-night and to-morrow. They may succeed, or they may fail—God knows! But let the die fall truly as it fell of old, and I repay the sister I have wronged, and wronged for you, shake off my past, and sail for a new home across the seas.

JEAN. Me, Wully? Cross the seas wi' ye? Man, ye've plenty sillers here!

BRODIE. Not always. And there are other things in life than siller—I'll make an honest woman of you and do what's right by the children.

JEAN. Div ye mean ye'll marry me?

BRODIE. Ay, Jean. If you will.

JEAN. God, this is a curious wooin'!

BRODIE. I await your answer.

JEAN. Faith, it's no a thing to be lichtly said.

BRODIE. I was right, you see, to wonder. What things of habit you women are! A new man comes easier to some of you than a new house. (*She gives him her hand*). Aye, I was sure of you in my heart, lass. And when will you be ready?

JEAN. Ready? It's a big word.

BRODIE. It's a word like another. Tuck up your sleeves and the thing's done. It's one stout pull, and then to sea! and the sea, Jean?—what's the sea? So much water! Think of the new life on the other shore, the new friends, the new hopes, the new aims! You'll be an honest woman, Jean; and the neighbours will be proud to know you; and the children! the children shall grow up at our side, and be loved and honoured, and bring us little ones of their own to make much of, and be glad in. When I think of what may be—of what shall

be, by heaven!—when I think of growing old and tranquil, a husband, a father, with my children's chicks upon my knee—O, Jean, you do not know how good it feels about my heart! There's our Cissy, she's a growing girl, Jean, and has a life to live, and a soul to be saved like the rest. And the boys have the makings of men in them. And we!—but better late than not at all!—When can you be ready?

JEAN. When ye like, ma man.

BRODIE. God bless you.—Cissy, lass, what's America?

CISSY. A continent.

BRODIE. That's right. Where is it?

CISSY. Oot westward awa'.

BRODIE. Right and right again. There's for your information; I pride myself upon my patronage of letters. She's like you, Jean.

JEAN. I aye thocht she was like you.

BRODIE. We'll see what they say to it over yonder.—And mind, Jean, no living soul but you and me must know of this. Silence means life to us—the new life. Say not a word, but make things ready for a move.

JEAN. An' is the Fiscal no to get his rent?

BRODIE. The 'Fiscal?

JEAN. Ow, ay, I clean forgot to tell ye. 'Fiscal Lawson's boucht the haill *land*, ye ken; he was here the morn, seekin' his rent, and was real chief wi' me forbye: a fine canty gentleman.

BRODIE. My woman, it's as well you told me!

JEAN. What for why?

BRODIE. He must not see me here. Though, after all, with him!—Ah, Procurator, Procurator, proud, proud was I to be your nephew! Now!—We are alike a pair of soothsayers, and grin when we encounter. Egad, and I respect him, for he's better at the trade than I am. He took in the dogs upon the street. But I've been behind the scenes: paint, paint: an old common rogue. When does he come?

JEAN. The nicht.

BRODIE. Ah well, we'll see. And look here, Jean, do you pine to pay this rent? I object to landlords on principle.

And we want every shilling we can scrape together. Get a week's grace, lass, get a week's grace.

SMITH (*without, after knocking*). Enter the Dook?

BRODIE. My lords and masters. Let them in, Jean. They bring the new life, and 'tis for the last time.

SCENE II

To these, SMITH, MOORE, AINSLIE

BRODIE. Welcome, gentlemen.

SMITH. Same to you, Bishop. How do, Duchess? Badger, you brute, take off your castor. None but the genteel deserve the fair; does they, Duchess?

BRODIE. Chairs, Jean. Make yourselves at home, Humphrey. George, take charge of the Cognac, and do the honours for me. (*To* AINSLIE, *who has remained in the door.*) Is that you, Ainslie? Come in, Ainslie. I shall not hurt you, Ainslie. Come in.

AINSLIE. I'm sayin'——

BRODIE. Say as little as you can, and let me give you back these dice. They are too honest to serve you every day; but I dare say you will find use for them again.

AINSLIE. I'm sayin', Deacon, I was real affrontit wi' thon mistake o' mine's; but between gentlemen——

BRODIE. I lay down with dogs, and got up with fleas. Can you better that?

AINSLIE. But I'm sayin', Deacon——

BRODIE. Give him drink, Geordie. He's a liar; give him drink.

AINSLIE. I was real affrontit——

BRODIE. Give him drink, and let him hold his tongue.

SMITH. Now, bone grubber? Easy with the parts of speech! Deakin, my pater familius, you fill the manly heart of George with honest joy. To see you thus, with Susan on your knee, so to speak, is almost too much for G. S. He is

a gay Lotharium, is George, but he keeps a corner in his bo-sum for the domestic affections. Look at the blessed kinchins, Badger! Ain't they father's pride and mother's joy all over? Alas! unconscious of the broom the little varmints play. H. M. Esquire, let me give you another. (*Pours for* Moore.)

Moore (*holding out glass*). O rot.

Smith (*pouring for* Ainslie). And the candleworm likewise!—Gentlemen all, I have now charged the social bowl, and rise to propose the health of our noble host and his amiable and accomplished duchess. And that their quivier may with each revolving year et-settery, et-settery, is the ardent 'ope of their honest but well-meaning friend, Roman and fellow-countryman, George S. (*They drink to each other.* Brodie *fills for* Moore *and himself.* Smith *takes the girl child on his knee*).

Moore. Here's fortune, you sir!

Brodie. And so the quarrel's over? I compliment you for your good sense, and it's not everyone who gets my word for that. You and I are villains in earnest. We can give and take like man and wife. We can have our brush, and make an end, and booze from the same bottle. You cheated me, but you cheated me well, and I respect you; it was pretty practice, and I'm proud to own it. If I could I should do the same. Every man for himself, and the devil for all.

Moore. Hear him, Dook.

Smith. O come now, damme, look here, Deakin!

Brodie. They call that cynicism in France, but here we call it business instinct. And then, you know, we three have done big things. We have set up the tallest robberies that Scotland ever saw—we three, with these hands. Do you mind the lock of the Bank? Do you mind the goldsmith's at St. Giles? Do you mind the Judge at Morningside, and how we gagged and hooded him with his own breeches? Do you mind the gutter we came down? Where's another man would have set foot on such a crazy perch, with fifty feet below and the road to hell? And we three did it, one by one,

with the moon to see us! And are such men to split over a pair of dice? We are not such dolts. You know me; I'm a man of the world; I've seen it from top to bottom, upstairs, downstairs, in my lady's chamber; and what are we all but rogues? Rogues all, Humphrey! Rogues all, Geordie! Perhaps you owe me a grudge; perhaps I owe you a grudge. What of that? We know the world, do we not? We're not children, we're not psalm-singers. Where shall I get a couple of bold blades like you? Where else will you get your Deacon? We can't afford—do you follow me?—we can't afford to quarrel, you and I. We hate each other like death? Be it so. But life, my lads, is business; it's not honour among thieves, nor loyalty, nor any rancid cant; it's business—cold, bald business.

MOORE. That's my motto. Business is business.

BRODIE. You take me, Badger? You're a man of parts. As long as there's a trick to turn or a shilling to pilfer, so long we hang together, and when the play's played out, and the game's up for good, why, blood be it—and we'll cut each other's throats like what we are. Till then, I'm yours, by hell, and you're mine.

MOORE. You're a man, Deacon. Strike me rotten if you ain't. Shake.

BRODIE (*shaking hands*). A man—am I not? And I've men for my comrades. Only follow where I lead, and you shall rummage the moon and fill your melting-pot with stars. A man?—try me!

MOORE. Look 'ere, Deacon, you and me's the best of friends. You're a cove wot knows a thing or two, that's wot's the matter with you.

SMITH. You're a nice pair, ain't you. Why, damme, if I ain't ashamed before the babes. (*To a child*). Yes, my pretty, it's a wicked world, so it is. But you and me'll be married some day, won't us? and retire to our estates in the country, shan't us? and go to church and be happy like the nobility and gentry! An it'll be George and his little wife and a black footman till death do us part. Damme, Deakin, I'm ashamed of you.

BRODIE. To business. Put down that child and show this creature downstairs.

SMITH. That's another pair of shoes. Portrait of George as the Accomplished Beadle. Only, if he may be allowed to conclude with a sentiment, he would add, that though he's only George the Pieman, that kind of pastry's not the harticle he hoffers to the public. And, sir, ever will be—George S.

BRODIE. Ainslie, you may go. You may cherish your dice, and sponge on them for small beer with your friend, the Captain. You will have your orders from Smith.

MOORE. You know me, Slinky?—All right.

AINSLIE. But it's forgi'e and forget, Deacon, is't no? And I was real affrontit, and——

BRODIE. Quoit him out, Geordie.

SMITH. This way, Mumps!

SCENE III

The same: less AINSLIE

BRODIE. And now to work. We do the Excise to-morrow.

MOORE (*joyously*). Muck! muck! muck!

BRODIE. The round goes by at ten. Immediately after, we begin. That leaves us a clear hour. You, George, grind and set the big centrebit. We want that, both the crowbars, and the first and second bunches. Mind: centrebit, crowbars, first and second bunches and big picklocks. You have that, George.

SMITH. All right.

MOORE. First and second bunches? Ain't it a job for number three?

BRODIE (*taking no notice*). You will wait in the door opposite, and once the round is up the street, enter the court by the arch. I join you there.

SMITH. I rather thought we'd pickle in by the back, Deacon. By the lane, you know.

Henry Pfeiffer Libra
MacMurray College
Jacksonville Illinois

BRODIE. By the arch. They sit late at the ale-house in the lane. Now, is that all? Yes. So far so good. Meanwhile, I've got another of my headaches. Which of you goes with me?

SMITH. Not me, Deakin. It's a jolly old full moon, and in that case G. S. has an appointment. (*Kisses his hand*).

MOORE. What's the rotten lay?

BRODIE. Leslie's.

MOORE. O rot! It ain't a week since you got blazing well nigh scruffed over it.

BRODIE. An accident. They never happen twice running.

MOORE. One at a time. That's my motto.

SMITH. The sentiments of George, Badger! His sentiments, to a T!

BRODIE. Then I do it single-handed. What did I tell you? You need me to be men; but I can be a man unaided. What! would you not have swung long since for a ten-penny nail or a leg of mutton? Answer me that, answer me that and tell me who's the man. (*A knock*). Is that he, Jean? Is that our venerable and hopeful for his rent?

JEAN. It'll be just the 'Fiscal, I'm thinkin'.

BRODIE. Then in with you behind these curtains, and see for yourselves how comely a thing is knavery when uncle Lawson is the knave. (*Knock*). *Aux ordres de monsieur!* My uncle, the rascal!—Make no noise, but see and profit by the sight.

SCENE IV

JEAN, LAWSON, CHILDREN; *the others concealed*

JEAN. I'm sweir to see you come in, 'Fiscal; for I cannae get ye the siller. Them that's promised's failed. Ye ken, 'Fiscal, a'body promises. And, eh, 'Fiscal, ye maun gie me a week, man, for I'm sair pit to it, that I am.

LAWSON. Mistress Watt, I'm sorry to say it, but from a' I hear of you on the stair-heid——

JEAN. Eh, 'Fiscal, ye ken what folks say. They aye

speak; or they wouldnae be folk, ye ken. And a puir lone wumman——

Lawson. Weel, weel, I ken a' that and a hantle mair. And I ken you're owre brawly dressed, Mistress Watt. *Mundus et vestitus muliebris.* I am no the man to be hard on ony body; I'm no the minister, ye ken; I'm but a puir auld sinful man: and this day of a' days, it would set me ill to be upsitten; for this day I was minded of a secret sin mysel'. He had a hard heart that tauld me; little he spared me, though I loved him like my son. And O, my lassie—for you're but a lassie to an auld man like me—O, my lassie, you and me maun tak' a thocht and mend. We've been a' day wandering on the ourie hills; but the nicht is near at hand, and the auld folk at hame—and that's in heaven, lassie—are a' wearied looking out.

Jean (*crying*). O, wheest, man, wheest!

Lawson. There, there. You wouldna be feared of an auld, kind body like me? Just you be as guid as you're bonnie. Gang to the kirk—do ye gang to the kirk?

Jean. I wouldnae daur.

Lawson. Hoots! it's for the chief of sinners God's waiting to be gracious—think o' that—he's waiting, lass! Had ye never a bairn out late?

Jean. Man, will ye wheest? I wad think shame to speak like that to a puir woman.

Lawson. Aweel, aweel, you'll think o't after I'm awa'. And never you fash yoursel' about the rent; let the rent bide; but when I come back, my woman, I would be real pleased and proud to see ye wi' fewer braws and nae usquebaugh. And—surely I should ken that cane. Rax me that cane, woman, rax me that cane.

Jean (*trying to recover* Brodie's *cane*). Here, gie't me, gie't me back.

Lawson (*with cane*). I ken that cane. Wha's is't?

Brodie (*coming forward from his concealment sobered and ashamed*). It is mine—Uncle.

Dumb show. Lawson *gives the cane and leaves the house. As the robbers come from behind the curtain the scene closes.*

TABLEAU VI

King's Evidence

The Stage Represents a Street

HUNT, AINSLIE

HUNT *brings in* AINSLIE *by the arm.*

HUNT. And so your name's Andrew Ainslie, is it? As I was saying, you're the very party I was looking for. Ain't it strange now, that I should have dropped across you comfortable and promiscuous like this?

AINSLIE. I dinna ken wha ye are, an' I'm ill for my bed.

HUNT. Let your bed wait, Andrew. I want a little chat with you; just a quiet little sociable wheeze. Just about our friends, you know. About Badger Moore, and George the Dook, and Jemmy Rivers, and Deacon Brodie, Andrew. Particularly Deacon Brodie.

AINSLIE. They're nae friens o' mines, mister. I ken naething an' naebody. An' noo I'll get to my bed, wulln't I?

HUNT. We're going to have our little talk out first. After that, perhaps I'll let you go, and perhaps I won't. It all depends on how we get along together. Now in a general way, Andrew, and speaking of a man as you find him, I'm all for peace and quietness myself. That's my usual game, Andrew, but when I do make a dust I'm considered by my friends to be rather a good hand at it. So don't you tread upon the worm.

AINSLIE. But I'm sayin'——

HUNT. You leave that to me, Andrew. You shall do your pitch presently. I'm first on the ground, and I lead off. With a question, Andrew. Did you ever hear in your life of such a natural curiosity as a Bow Street Runner?

AINSLIE. Aiblins ay an' aiblins no.

HUNT. 'Aiblins ay and aiblins no.' Very good indeed, Andrew. Now, I'll ask you another. Did you ever see a

Bow Street Runner, Andrew? With the naked eye, so to speak?

AINSLIE. What's your wull?

HUNT. Artful bird! Now since we're getting on so cosy *and* so free, I'll ask you another, Andrew. Should you like to see a Bow Street Runner? (*Producing staff.*) 'Cos, if so, you've only got to cast your eyes on me. Do you queer the red weskit, Andrew? Pretty colour, ain't it? So nice and warm for the winter too. (AINSLIE *dives;* HUNT *collars him.*) No, you don't. Not this time. Run away like that before we've finished our little conversation? You're a nice young man, you are. Suppose we introduce our wrists into these here darbies? Now we shall get along cosier and freer than ever. Want to lie down, do you? All right! anything to oblige.

AINSLIE (*grovelling*). It wasna me, it wasna me. It's bad companions; I've been lost wi' bad companions an' the drink. An', O mister! ye'll be a kind gentleman to a puir lad, an' me sae weak, an' fair rotten wi' the bad disease. Ye've a bonnie kind heart, my dear, dear gentleman; ye wadna hang sitchan a thing as me. I'm no fit to hang. They ca' me the Cannleworm! An' I'll can dae somethin' for ye, wulln't I? An' ye'll can hang the ithers?

HUNT. I thought I hadn't mistook my man. Now you look here, Andrew Ainslie, you're a bad lot. I've evidence to hang you fifty times over. But the Deacon is my mark. Will you peach? or won't you? You blow the gaff, and I'll pull you through. You don't, and I'll scragg you as sure as my name's Jerry Hunt.

AINSLIE. I'll dae onything. It's the hangin' fleys me. I'll dae onything, onything, no to hang.

HUNT. Don't lie crawling there, but get up and answer me like a man. Ain't this Deacon Brodie the fine workman that's been doing all these tip topping burglaries?

AINSLIE. It's him, mister, it's him. That's the man. Ye're in the very bit. Deacon Brodie. I'll can tak' ye to his very door.

HUNT. How do you know?

AINSLIE. I gi'ed him a han' wi' them a'. It was him an' Badger Moore, and Geordie Smith,—an' they gart me gang wi' them whether or no; I'm that weak, an' whiles I'm donner'd wi' the drink. But I ken a', an' I'll tell a'. And, O kind gentleman! you'll speak to their lordships for me, an' I'll no be hangit—I'll no be hangit, wull I?

HUNT. But you shared, didn't you? I wonder what share they thought you worth. How much did you get for last night's performance down at Mother Clarke's?

AINSLIE. Just five pund, Mister. Five pund. As sure's death it wadna be a penny mair. No but I askit mair—I did that, I'll no deny it, mister—but Badger kickit me, an' Geordie he said a bad sweir, an' made he'd cut the liver out o' me, an' catch fish wi't. It's been that way frae the first: an aith an' a bawbee was aye guid eneuch for puir Andra.

HUNT. Well, and why did they do it? I saw Jemmy dance a hornpipe on the table, and booze the company all round when the Deacon was gone. What made you cross the fight and play booty with your own man?

AINSLIE. Just to make him rob the Excise, Mister. They're wicked, wicked men.

HUNT. And is he right for it?

AINSLIE. Ay is he.

HUNT. By jingo! When's it for?

AINSLIE. Dear kind gentleman, I dinna rightly ken—the Deacon's that sair angered wi' me. I'm to get my orders frae Geordie the nicht.

HUNT. Oh, you're to get your orders from Geordie, are you? Now look here, Ainslie. You know me. I'm Hunt the Runner; I put Jemmy Rivers in the jug this morning; I've got you this evening; I mean to wind up with the Deacon. You understand? All right. Then just you listen. I'm going to take these here bracelets off, and send you home to that celebrated bed of yours. Only, as soon as you've seen the Dook you come straight round to me at Mr. Procurator-Fiscal's, and let me know the Dook's views. One word mind, and—cl'k! It's a bargain.

AINSLIE. Never you fear for that. I'll tak' my bannet

an' come straucht to ye. Eh God, I'm glad it's nae mair nor that to start wi'. An' may the Lord bless ye, dear kind gentleman, for your kindness—may the Lord bless ye.

HUNT. You pad the hoof.

AINSLIE (*going out*). An' so I wull, wulln't I not? An' bless, bless ye while there's breath in my body, wulln't I not?

HUNT (*solus*). You're a nice young man, Andrew Ainslie! Jemmy Rivers and the Deacon in two days! By Jingo! (*He dances an instant gravely, whistling to himself.*) Jerry, that 'ere little two hundred of ours is as safe as the bank.

TABLEAU VII

UNMASKED

The Stage represents a room in LESLIE'S *house. A practicable window, C., through which a band of strong moonlight falls into the room. A practicable door in wing, L., having the appearance of a street door, with bolts and chains. A table, with candles and writing materials at back, R.* LESLIE *is seated at the table finishing a letter.*

SCENE I

LESLIE (*sealing*). There is the letter. You will not fail to give it to her. I cannot find words, Procurator, to thank you for your kindness; if you had been my father you could not have done more. And trust me, I shall do all that you desire, and hold my peace, and ask no questions—and that with a light heart if it's for Mary. I am a man who can love.

LAWSON. Weel, man, I tell ye honestly I was grieved to hear it; and what mair am I to say? It's sair, sair upon the lass, and sair, sair upon you. But ye've my good-will, and there's aye hope while the lamp holds on to burn. *Usque ad mortem*, as we say. He that tholes over-comes. But I see ye're looking very white-like, and ye're black about the e'en. Haud up a heart, man.

LESLIE. Ah, never fear! I take her brother's word; I'd

take his word against the world. 'Tis not true love that alters my complexion; I've something else on hand. Come—I'll tell you, under seal. I've not been in bed till daylight for a week.

LAWSON. Hoots, laddie, hoots, there's nae sense in the like o' that.

LESLIE. Gad, but there is, though! Why, Procurator, this is town's business; this is a municipal affair;—I'm a public character. Why? Ah, here's a nut for the crown prosecutor! I'm a bit of a party to a robbery.

LAWSON. Guid guide us, man, what d'ye mean?

LAWSON. You shall hear. A week ago to-night I was passing through this very room without a candle on my way to bed, when—what should I see, but a masked man fumbling at that window! How he did the Lord knows—I suspect, Procurator, it was not the first he'd tried—for he opened it as handily as his own front door.

LAWSON. Preserve me! Another of thae robberies.

LESLIE. That's it. And of course I tried to seize him, but the rascal was too quick. He was down and away in an instant. You never saw a thing so daring and adroit.

LAWSON. Is that a'? Ye're a bauld lad, I'll say that for ye. I'm glad it wasna waur.

LESLIE. Yes, that's all plain sailing. But here's the hitch. Why didn't I tell the Procurator-Fiscal? You never thought of that.

LAWSON. No, man. Why?

LESLIE. Aha! There's the riddle. Will you guess? No? I thought I knew the man.

LAWSON. What d'ye say?

LESLIE. I thought I knew him.

LAWSON. Wha was't?

LESLIE. Ah, there you go beyond me. That I cannot tell.

LAWSON. As God sees ye, laddie, are ye speaking truth?

LESLIE. Well, of course!

LAWSON. The haill truth?

LESLIE. All of it. Why not?

LAWSON. Man, I'd a kind o' gliff.

LESLIE. Why, what were you afraid of? Had you a suspicion?

LAWSON. Me? Me a suspicion? Ye're daft, sir; and me the crown offeecial? Eh man, I'm a' shakin'. And sae ye thocht ye kennt him?

LESLIE. I did that. And what's more, I've sat up every night in case of his return. I promise you, Procurator, he shall not slip me twice. Meanwhile I'm worried and put out. You understand how such a fancy will upset a man. I'm uneasy with my friends and on bad terms with my own conscience. I keep watching, spying, comparing, putting two and two together, hunting for resemblances until my head goes round. It's like a puzzle in a dream. Only yesterday I thought I had him. And who d' you think it was?

LAWSON. Wha? Wha was't? Speak, Mr. Leslie, speak. I'm an auld man; dinna forget that.

LESLIE. I name no names. It would be unjust to him; and, upon my word, it was so silly it would be unfair on me. However here I sit, night after night. I mean him to come back; come back he shall; and I'll tell you who he was next morning.

LAWSON. Let sleeping dogs lie, Mr. Leslie: ye dinna ken what ye micht see. And then, leave him alane, he'll come nae mair. And sitting up a' nicht—it's a *factum imprestabile*, as we say; a thing impossible to man. Gang ye to your bed, like a guid laddie, and sleep lang and soundly, and bonnie, bonnie dreams to ye! And I'll no' forget the letter. (*Without.*) Let sleeping dogs lie, and gang ye to your bed.

SCENE II

LESLIE

LESLIE (*calling*). In good time, never fear! (*He carefully bolts and chains the door.*) The old gentleman seems upset. What for, I wonder? Has he had a masked visitor?

Why not? It's the fashion. Out with the lights. (*Blows out the candles. The stage is only lighted by the moon through the window.*) He is sure to come one night or other. He must come. Right or wrong, I feel it in the air. Man, but I know you, I know you somewhere. That trick of the shoulders, the hang of the clothes—whose are they? Where have I seen them? And then, that single look of the eye, that one glance about the room as the window opened—it is almost friendly; I have caught it over the glass's—I've been at supper with that eye! If it should be—his? No, his it is not.

WATCHMAN (*without*). Past ten o'clock, and a fine moonlight night!

ANOTHER (*further away*). Past ten o'clock, and all's well.

LESLIE. Past ten? Ah, there's a long night before you and me, watchmen. Heavens, what a trade! But it will be something to laugh over with Mary and—with him? Damn it, the delusion is too strong for me. It's a thing to be ashamed of. 'We Brodies'—how she says it! 'We Brodies and our Deacon'—what a pride she takes in it, and how good it sounds to me! 'Deacon of his craft, sir, Deacon of the——' (BRODIE, *masked, appears without at the window, which he proceeds to force.*) Ha! I knew he'd come! I was sure of it. (*He crouches near and nearer to the window, keeping in the shade.*) And I know you too. I swear I know you.

SCENE III

BRODIE, LESLIE

BRODIE *enters by the window with assurance and ease, closes it silently, and proceeds to traverse the room. As he moves,* LESLIE *leaps upon and grapples him.*

LESLIE. Take off that mask!

BRODIE. Hands off!

LESLIE. Take off the mask!

BRODIE. Leave go, by God, leave go!

LESLIE. Take it off!

BRODIE (*overpowered*). Leslie——

LESLIE. Ah! you know me! (*Succeeds in tearing off the mask.*) Brodie!

BRODIE (*in the moonlight*). Brodie.

LESLIE. You—you, Brodie, you?

BRODIE. Brodie, sir, Brodie as you see.

LESLIE. What does it mean? What does it mean, my God? Were you here before? Is this the second time? Are you a thief, man? are you a thief? Speak, speak, or I'll kill you.

BRODIE. I am a thief.

LESLIE. And my friend, my own friend, and—Mary, Mary! Deacon, Deacon, for God's sake, no!

BRODIE. God help me!

LESLIE. 'We Brodies! We Brodies!'

BRODIE. Leslie——

LESLIE. Stand off! Don't touch me! You're a thief.

BRODIE. Leslie, Leslie——

LESLIE. A thief's sister! Why are you here? why are you here? Tell me! Why do you not speak? Man, I know you of old. Are you Brodie, and have nothing to say?

BRODIE. To say? Not much, God help me, and commonplace, commonplace like sin. I was honest once; I made a false step; I couldn't retrace it; and that's all.

LESLIE. You have forgot the bad companions!

BRODIE. I did forget them. They were there.

LESLIE. Commonplace! Commonplace! Hound, do you speak to me, do you reason with me, do you make excuses—you—a man found out, shamed, a liar, a thief—a man that's killed me, killed this heart in my body—and you speak? What am I to do? I hold your life in my hand—have you thought of that? What am I to do?

BRODIE. Do what you please. You have me trapped.

LESLIE. Are you to go to the gallows? Say—to the gallows?

BRODIE. You have me trapped.

LESLIE. The gallows, the gallows, is it to be the gallows? Speak.

BRODIE. I'm in your hands; I'm trapped.

LESLIE. You know I would not hang you for the world. You know I dare not hang you.

BRODIE. Leslie, you were once my friend. You found something to love, something to honour in me. O that was a part of me! It was not a lie; it was a part of me you loved. Have you not ill thoughts yourself? It must be; we have all our secret evil. Only mine has broken loose; it is my maniac brother who has slipped his chain; it does not change the part of me you loved. Look at me. If you knew how my deceit weighed on me, if you knew how my heart leaps up to be found out, perhaps—perhaps, you might forgive me.

LESLIE. Forgive you! Do you care for my forgiveness? Not you! I've told you all you care for; you are not to hang.

BRODIE. If you knew, Leslie, if you knew! I came here to-night—it seems vile, but God knows—God bear me witness, I came here to make you happy.

LESLIE. Happy!

BRODIE. Did I not stop the marriage? It was to make that marriage possible I came; it was to repay my sister's dowry—nay, man, but that was how it was! Money I wanted, and money I had—and it was to repay it,—it was for her sake and for yours that I came here.

LESLIE. Silence! How dare you! I'll not hear of her, I'll not hear of her from you.

BRODIE. Think of me as you like; despise me, hate me, hang me if you will; but, for the love of heaven, have pity on my sister. O man, I have been falling—falling all my life—from bad to worse, from heaven to hell; doomed, doomed, and I knew it. But for her? What—what has she done? What has she done, kind heaven, but what is pure and lovely? Leslie, you are hard, proud, righteous; but if you play her false, if you are anything but generous and

true to her—O give him, heaven, a million lives, that justice may run havoc through them all.

LESLIE (*at work unchaining and unbolting door*). I open this door for you to go out of this house, you and your friendship, out into the night.

BRODIE. Is that your answer? That? She's a thief's sister, and you'll none of her; she's a thief's sister, and it runs in the blood; she's a thief's sister, and you—you're what they call good!

LESLIE (*finishing with chains*). You—you go out of this place! (*He throws the door open, which he stands holding.*) Out—out—and let me see your face no more!

BRODIE. You have a God whom you pretend to worship; you're what they call good; you're a Christian—O save the mark, you are a Christian! and you fling me away like an infected ha'penny? And my sister—a thief's sister!

LESLIE. I hold this door open; I hold it open; I hold it open, open. I look at you with loathing. Go!

BRODIE. Go? or not? Have you no fear? Are we alone? Go?

LESLIE. Go while there's yet time, or by the heart of God——

BRODIE. Do you threaten me—me?

LESLIE. For the last time, it's for the last time—go!

BRODIE. I go—into the night, as you tell me—hating you with a sick hatred for the wrong you do my sister, for the hate you've shown to me. There's not a fibre in my body but condemns you. These Christians! Man, but I'll mind you! (*He goes out.* LESLIE *closes door with a loud noise, and falls insensible.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT IV

The Open Door

TABLEAU VIII

The Robbery

The Stage represents the outside of the Excise Office in Chapel's Court. At the back, L. C., an archway opening on the High Street. The door at the Excise in wing, R.; the opposite side of the stage is lumbered with barrels, packing-cases, etc. Moonlight; the Excise Office casts a shadow over half the stage. A clock strikes the hour. A round of the City Guard, with halberts, lanterns, etc., enters and goes out again by the arch, after having examined the fastenings of the great door, and the lumber on the left. Cry without in the High Street: "Ten by the bell, and a fine clear night." *Then, enter cautiously by the arch,* Smith, Moore, *and* Ainslie, *loaded with tools.*

SCENE I

Smith, Moore, Ainslie

Smith (*entering first*). Come on. Coast clear.

Moore (*after they have come to the front*). Ain't he turned up yet?

Smith. (*to* Ainslie). Now, Maggot! The fishing's going to begin.

Ainslie. Dinna cangle, Geordie. My back's fair broke.

Moore. O muck! Hand out them tools.

Smith. All right, Humptious! (*to* Ainslie.) You're a nice old sort for a rag-and-bone man—can't hold a bag open! (*Taking out tools.*) Here they was. Here are the bunchums, one *and* two; and jolly old keys was they! Here's the picklocks; crowbars; and here's Lord George's pet bull's eye, his old and valued friend, the Cracksman's Treasure!

MOORE. Just like you. Forgot the rotten centrebit.

SMITH. That's all you know. Here she is, bless her! Portrait of George as a gay hironmonger.

MOORE. O rot! Hand it over, and keep yourself out of that there thundering moonlight.

SMITH (*lighting lantern*). All right, old mumble-peg!

AINSLIE. Losh, I heard a noise. (*Alarm; they crouch into the shadow, and listen.*)

SMITH. All serene. (*To* AINSLIE.) Am I to cut that liver out of you? Now, am I? (*A whistle.*) 'St! here we are. (*Whistles a modulation, which is answered.*)

SCENE II

To these, BRODIE

MOORE. Waiting for you, Deacon.

BRODIE. I see. Everything ready?

SMITH. All a-growing and a-blowing.

BRODIE. Give me the light. (*Briefly examines tools and doors with bull's eye.*) You, George, stand by and hand up the pieces. Ainslie, take the glim. Moore, out and watch.

MOORE. I didn't come here to do sentry-go, I didn't.

BRODIE. You come here to do as I tell you. (MOORE *goes up slowly.*) Second bunch, George; I know the lock. Steady with the glim. (*At work.*) No good. Give me the centrebit.

SMITH. Right. (*Work continues.* AINSLIE *drops lantern.*)

BRODIE. Curse you! (*Throttling and kicking him.*) You shake, and you shake, and you can't even hold a light for your betters, hey?

AINSLIE. Eh Deacon, Deacon——

SMITH. Now, Ghost! (*With lantern.*)

BRODIE. 'St! Moore!

MOORE. Wot's the row?

BRODIE. Take you the light.

MOORE (*to* AINSLIE). Wo' j' yer shakin' at? (*Kicks him.*)

BRODIE (*to* AINSLIE). Go you, and see if you're any good at keeping watch. Inside the arch; and if you let a footfall pass, I'll break your back. (AINSLIE *retires.*) Steady with the light. (*At work with centrebit.*) Hand up number four, George. (*At work with picklock.*) That has it.

SMITH. Well done, our side.

BRODIE. Now the crowbar! (*At work.*) That's it. Put down the glim, Badger, and help at the wrench. Your whole weight, lads! Put your backs to it! (*While they work at the bar,* BRODIE *stands by, dusting his hands with a pocket-handkerchief. As the door opens.*) *Voilà!* In with you.

MOORE (*entering with light*). Mucking fine work too, Deacon!

BRODIE. Up with the irons, Duke!

SMITH. How about the Phantom?

BRODIE. Leave him to me. I'll give him a look. (*Enters office.*)

SMITH (*following*). Houp-là!

SCENE III

AINSLIE; *afterwards* BRODIE; *afterwards* HUNT *and Officers.*

AINSLIE. Ca' ye that mainners? Ye're grand gentry by your way o't! Eh, sirs, my hench! Ay, that was the Badger. God, but ye'll look bonnie hangin', man! (*A faint whistle.*) Lord's sake, what's thon? Ay, it'll be Hunt an' his lads. (*Whistle repeated.*) Losh me, what needs he whustle, whustle? Does he think me deaf? (*Goes up.* BRODIE *enters from office, stands an instant, sees him making a signal through the arch.*)

BRODIE. Rats! (*Hides L. among lumber. Enter noiselessly through arch* HUNT *and Officers.*)

HUNT. Birds caught?

AINSLIE. They're a' ben the hoose, Mister.

HUNT. All three?

AINSLIE. The haill set, Mister.

BRODIE. Liar!

HUNT. Mum, lads, and follow me. (*Exit, with his men, into Office.* BRODIE *seen with dagger.*)

HUNT. In the King's name!
MOORE. Muck!
SMITH. Go it, Badger.
HUNT. Take 'em alive, boys!
} (*Within.*)

AINSLIE. Eh, but that's awfu'. (*The Deacon leaps out and stabs him. He falls without a cry.*)

BRODIE. Honest at last. (*Kicking him.*)

SCENE IV

HUNT *and Officers; with* SMITH *and* MOORE *handcuffed. Signs of a severe struggle.*

HUNT (*entering.*) Bring 'em along, lads! *Looking at prisoners with lantern.*) Pleased to see you again, Badger! And you too, George! But I'd rather have seen your principal. Where's he got to?

MOORE. To hell, I hope.

HUNT. Always the same pretty flow of language, I see, Hump! (*Looking at burglary with lantern.*) A very tidy piece of work, Dook; very tidy! Much too good for you. Smacks of a fine tradesman. It was the Deacon, I suppose?

SMITH. You ought to know G. S. better by this time, Jerry.

HUNT. All right, your Grace! we'll talk it over with the Deacon himself. Where's the jackal? Here, you, Ainslie! Where are you?—— By jingo, I thought as much. Stabbed to the heart and dead as a herring!

SMITH. Bravo!

HUNT. More of the Deacon's work, I guess? Does him credit too, don't it, Badger?

MOORE. You ax my foot. Was that the rotten cove that peached?

HUNT. That was the rotten cove.

MOORE. And is he mucking well corpsed?

HUNT. I should just about reckon he was.

MOORE. Then, damme, I don't mind swinging!

HUNT. We'll talk about that presently. M'Intyre and Stewart, you get a stretcher and take that rubbish to the Office. Pick it up; it's only a dead informer. Hand these two gentlemen over to Mr. Procurator-Fiscal, with Mr. Jerry Hunt's compliments. Johnstone and Syme, you come along with me. I'll bring the Deacon round myself.

SCENE CLOSES

TABLEAU IX

THE TWO WOMEN

The Stage represents the street before BRODIE'S *house. Enter* LESLIE *and* MARY *from the house. They stand talking at the door. During the scene,* JEAN WATT, *with a child in her arms, is seen crouching at the wing. A lamp over the door.*

SCENE I

MARY, LESLIE; *afterwards* JEAN, *at wing*

MARY. Never fear, Walter—I can wait alone. O my dear dad! O my dear, dear old dad!

LESLIE. I fear it is too late; I fear he is past the help of doctors; but I shall run, dear, run, and soon be home again to you. And come, look braver, or I cannot bear to leave you.

MARY. Alas! I am more troubled than you think; and even yet I have not told you all. My brother ought to

know, it is his right to know, to be beside—the dad. And O Walter, I cannot make him hear! Knock as I will, he does not answer. It is terrible. His father is dying, and he will not answer! O how will he forgive me when he knows!

LESLIE. Never mind him. He is out. And believe me, Mary, it would be well if he were out for good and all.

MARY. You put a wrong meaning on my words. He is in sore straits, poor lad, and not himself just now. And remember, he is still my brother and your friend; and his father is dying.

LESLIE. I remember it all. I remember it all.

MARY. And then—out? What do you mean? You know he is not out. He had one of his attacks, and went early to bed. They are dreadful while they last, and he cannot bear to be disturbed—I have told you so often and often. But to-night, with our father so ill—I could not help it, could I? I have been three times to his door. I have knocked and knocked. And I am frightened. He might be dead.

LESLIE. Not he. Let him alone.

MARY. I see you suspect something. So do I.

LESLIE. What do you suspect?

MARY. I am afraid—I cannot help my thoughts, can I? I am afraid he must—use opium?

LESLIE. You are right, that is it. Keep from his door. It can do no good, and it may do harm.

MARY. But Uncle's messages—there have been four, Walter—the Procurator has sent round to him four times; and then that strange low woman who came crying to the door; and my father—Walter, my heart is like lead. It seems as if my past, which was all so kind and quiet, had come to an end here,—and there was something else beyond, something—O I know I am nervous, but it seems to me like something deadly!

LESLIE. You have been a brave girl all your life, Mary; be a brave girl to the end. Think that I have your hand in mine, and will hold it tight to my heart; and whatever happens, whatever you learn, think that I knew it all before and only loved you better. It would be different if we were

parted; but here we are together, and trouble can only bring us nearer. The end will come in God's good time, and when it comes it will not find you alone. And now let me go. I will run all the way, and be back ere you have time to weary.

SCENE II

MARY, JEAN

MARY. He is very good, and he loves me; but his words themselves are terrifying, and I shrink from my own thoughts. There is a fate upon this house. What does it mean? O what can it be?

JEAN. Mistress——

MARY. Ah! Who is there? You—you again? You startled me. What do you want?

JEAN. I'm aye waitin' for him.

MARY. Waiting for him still? Do you know the Deacon —you?

JEAN. Ye'll be his tittie?

MARY. I am his sister, yes. But who are you? Speak to me. Why are you crying? Speak, and tell me what it means.

JEAN. I maun see him. Eh, lassie, it's life and death!

MARY. Death! Oh my heart!

JEAN. Ye're bonnie, an' ye're braw, an' ye look guid, an' ye maunna turn me awa', for it's unco business brings me chappin' to your door. I maun see him, bonnie leddie! I'm a puir body, an' no fit to be seen speakin' wi' the likes o' you. But ye're the Deacon's tittie, an', O lass, ye hae the Deacon's e'en, an' for the love of the dear kind Lord let's in an' hae a word wi' him or it be owre late.

MARY. You do not understand. I have his orders, and I dare not disobey.

JEAN. Lassie, will ye no let me in? I'm bringin' siller.

MARY. Siller? You? What do you mean? Siller! For whom? Not for him, O not for him!

JEAN. It's an unco business, leddie.

MARY. O father, father, if you could hear! What are you? What are you to—him?

JEAN. I be the best frien' 'at ever he had; for, O dear leddie, I wad gie my bluid to help him, though it sets me ill to say it to your face.

MARY. And the—the child?

JEAN. The bairn?

MARY. Nothing—O nothing! I am in trouble, and I know not what I say. And I cannot help you, I cannot help you if I would. He told me he was not for anything to be disturbed. And indeed I have tried—and O I think I shall lose my mind! What is this grief that is coming on us all? You know—you can tell me if you would; and as for me, I hear nothing but threats, and meet nothing but mysteries; and my heart shudders in my breast.

JEAN. Ay, it's unco business.

MARY. His father is dying within there—dying, I tell you—dying!

JEAN. It's mebbe just as weel.

MARY. Well? Well? Has it come to that? O Walter, Walter, come back, come back, or I shall die!

JEAN. He's comin', leddie. I'm awa'.

MARY. Why should you? Stay and speak to me before him.

JEAN. Na, na, he's your jo. He maunna see ye speakin' wi' the likes o' me. (*She goes out.*)

MARY. What does it mean? What does it mean?

SCENE III

MARY, LESLIE, DOCTOR.

LESLIE. Here's the doctor, Mary.

MARY. Doctor, he is very ill. (*They enter the house.*)

SCENE OPENS

TABLEAU X

At Bay

The Stage represents the Deacon's room, as in Tableau I. and IV. Fire-light. Stage dark. A pause. Then knocking at the door, C.; cries without of "Willie!" "Mr. Brodie!" "Brodie!" *The door is burst open.*

SCENE I

Mary, Leslie, Doctor; *with lights*

Doctor. The chamber is unoccupied.

Mary. Dead, and he not here.

Doctor. The bed has not been slept in. The counterpane is not turned down.

Mary. It is not true, it cannot be true.

Doctor. My dear young lady, you must have misunderstood your brother's language.

Mary. O, no! that I did not. That I am sure I did not.

Doctor (*looking at door*). The strange thing is, the bolt.

Leslie. You will bear in mind, Doctor, that I opposed this step.

Doctor. Young gentleman, we have done as Miss Brodie wished, and we have done our duty. To have a secret, not to find it—there's the fault.

Leslie. It was a cruel blunder.

Doctor. Sir, you seem to know more of this than I. If young Mr. Brodie can be found, send and fetch him. Affliction is enough without scandal.

Leslie. The scandal is in our keeping, Doctor. It need go no further.

Doctor. It shall not.

Mary. Kind heaven, what does it mean!

Doctor. I think there is no more to be done?

LESLIE. We thank you, Doctor. There is nothing more. But Miss Brodie is here alone; you pass her uncle's door; might I so far trouble you?

DOCTOR. The Procurator-Fiscal? I shall make it my duty. Expect him soon. (*They go out.*)

MARY (*hastily searches the room*). No, he is not there. She was right! O father, you can never know—praise God!

SCENE II

After a pause, BRODIE, *through the window*

BRODIE. Saved! And the alibi! Man, but you've been near it this time—near the rope, near the rope. Ah, boy, it was your neck, your neck you fought for! They were closing hell-doors upon me, swift as the wind, when I slipped through and shot for heaven! Saved! The dog that sold me, I settled him; and the other dogs are staunch. Man, but your alibi will stand!—Is the window fast? The neighbours must not see the Deacon, the poor, sick Deacon, up and stirring at this time o' night.—Ay, the good old room in the good, cozy old house—and the rat a dead rat, and all saved! (*He lights the candles*). Your hand shakes, sir? Fie! And you saved; and you snug and sick in your bed, and it but a dead rat after all? (*He takes off his hanger, and lays it on the table.*) Ay, it was a near touch. Will it come to the dock? If it does! You've a tongue, and you've a head, and you've an alibi; and your alibi will stand. Ah, Deacon, you're the rogue of the world! You're crafty and you're sure; you go and you come; and no one sees and no one knows; and let them do their worst, you've your alibi to live and die on. Deacon, you're the rogue of the world. (*He takes off his coat; then with a gesture of striking*) Home! He fell without a sob. 'He breaketh them against the bosses of his buckler!' and so deep, too, and so crafty, and your alibi—ah, Deacon, that's your life! Your

alibi, your alibi! (*He takes up a candle and turns towards the door.*)—O!—Open, open, open! Judgment of God, the door is open!

SCENE III

BRODIE, MARY

BRODIE. Did you open that door?

MARY. I did.

BRODIE. You—you opened that door?

MARY. I did open it.

BRODIE. Were you—alone?

MARY. I was not. Mr. Leslie was with me; and the doctor.

BRODIE. O! Mr. Leslie and the doctor. Very true. Then it's all over town by now. Mr. Leslie and the Doctor. The Doctor? What doctor? Why the doctor?

MARY. My father is dead. And I know—I know it all. And we must help you. O think if there is nothing to be done—O for God's sake think and let us save you.

BRODIE. Your father is dead. O yes. He's dead, is he? Dead. Quite right. Quite right. How did you open the door? It's strange. I bolted it.

MARY. We could not help it, Will—now could we? Mr. Leslie forced it. He had to, had he not?

BRODIE. Mr. Leslie forced it? Leslie? Was he here? He forced it? He? God's anger blight him body and heart!—He!——

MARY. We did it for the best; it was I who did it—I, your own sister. And, O Will, my Willie! O my lad, forget the past and let us save you! What can we do? We will do it—anything—anything!

BRODIE. Anything! (*Laughs.*) Thank you, you have done enough.

MARY. Will, you lose time; take heart; will you be lost for want of heart—and we here—who long to save you, who are mad to save you! Think, think; and it's done—if it

were death it's done! Think, Deacon! Think upon your danger!

Brodie. Danger? O my young lady, you have taken care of that! It's not danger now, it's death—Death? Ah! Death! Death! Death! (*Clutching the table. Then recovering.*) And it's your doing. Think of that, sister, think of that! My sister hanged me with her own two hands! Yes, with those two hands you did it! And you can look me in the face? Are you not frightened? Tell me that—not frightened?

Mary. I frightened?

Brodie. Not? Hey? Not frightened, drab?

SCENE IV

Brodie, Mary, Leslie

Leslie. Brodie, keep back!

Brodie. O, and this is Mr. Leslie? Well, here I am, sir, waiting for the rope. Waiting for the rope, sir, as you see. I am infinitely beholden to you for kindness to me and to my sister; but this house is mine; and I'll not suffer you to keep your foot in it so long as I'm the master. Tit for tat, Mr. Leslie, tit for tat. I do not like to insult you before your woman; but it's my house, and out of it you go!

Leslie. I shall not go. I stay here for this lady's sake. For her sake, too, you must let bygones be bygones, and give me leave to help you. There's a good horse in my stable——

Brodie. I'm waiting for the rope.

Leslie. Up, man, up and away. Are you the Brodie who has baffled us all these years, and do you stay here to meet shame and death half-way? You, with friends to aid you, and children to care for, and a whole world open to you yet? Trust us to help you. While we live trust us to help you!

MARY. Do what he says, Will. You may be far away ere morning. Do what he says, for the sake of heaven!

BRODIE. And so you two are going to marry, are you?

LESLIE. As soon as the law permits, we shall be man and wife.

BRODIE. Man and wife? I am a thief; I am a murderer; I am waiting for the rope. And you two are going to be man and wife? Did you not tell me, Jezebel, that my father was lying stiff in the next room? Is he cold yet? And am I not your brother, born in the same bed? Look at me, look at me, and then go marry—you who spurned and you who hanged me! Go marry on your father's grave, beside your brother's gibbet. Go marry on my curse, dead hearts, dead hearts! A bad friend, a bad sister—go marry and breed rogues.

MARY. O God, forgive him!

BRODIE. O you—let me tell you. This man with his arm about you—he spat you from him with loathing but last night. He called you a thief's sister; he would none of you, not he; he said he knew your trade. Look to the marriage, look well to the marriage!

LESLIE. Do you hear him?

MARY. Give me your hand.

SCENE V

BRODIE, MARY, LESLIE, LAWSON, JEAN

LAWSON. Are ye here? Eh, man, are ye here still?

BRODIE. I'm waiting for the rope. A rat in a hole.

LAWSON. Mary, my puir lass, this is a sore nicht for you. Father, brither, and—Mr. Leslie, I'm prood to see ye here, sir. Ye're a man. (*They shake hands.*)

LESLIE. And who is this?

BRODIE. Ha! Company? Here's a family party. Leslie, here's your sister. Mary, kiss your niece.

JEAN. Eh, man, tak' a thocht upon yoursel'.

BRODIE. Back, hussy, keep away from me. Leslie, you're a judge of women, what do you think of her? There—there's where I spent my sister's dowry, and the profits of my trade, and what I diced my neck for. Look at her, she's flesh and blood like the rest of you, only not so clean.

MARY. She is my guest; she shall not be insulted; I will not bear it. (*Takes the child.*) Willie—Deacon—there is death in the house and such sore grief—O Willie, be a man!

JEAN. O tak' a thocht, my man, an' get you clean awa'. I've brocht ye siller.

LAWSON. Ye shall sit rent free, mistress, as lang's there's breath in William Lawson's body.

JEAN. I'm ready, man, to cross the seas.

MARY (*holding out the child*). See, Will, for this!

BRODIE. Off, drabs! I'm waiting for the rope.

SCENE VI

To these, HUNT

HUNT. Good evening, Mr. Procurator-Fiscal. Good evening, Miss. The game's up, Deacon. I'll trouble you to come along with me.

BRODIE. In one moment, officer. No, never mind the warrant. Do you think I'll stand on trifles when all's up. You've taken Deacon Brodie? There are more for you to take. This was a family council; they were planning my escape—not I, not I, officer—they were, this kind of crew here than I call my family. 'Fly,' says my sister; that was she who hanged me. 'Take my money,' says this Jezebel; she was my mistress, she's been privy all along. 'Take my horse,' says my friend there; he that spurned me. 'Mind my warrant,' says my uncle; an official, under trust. Rogues, rogues; accessories after the fact, officer, all accessories after the fact;—and the Jezebel an accomplice from the first; and the uncle steeped in smuggled brandy!—And I, I've lived a man, and I'll die as I've lived. I had but one

pleasure in life; it was to fool and juggle and jockey you one and all. I've done it always, damn you; and damn you, I'll do it once more! (*He snatches his hanger from the table, and rushes upon* HUNT, *who parries and runs him through. He reels across the stage, and falls.*) Rogues all!—rogues—rogues. (*He dies.*)

CURTAIN

August, 1878—*January*, 1879.

BEAU AUSTIN

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AND

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

DEDICATED

WITH ADMIRATION AND RESPECT

TO

GEORGE MEREDITH

Bournemouth,
1st October, 1884

PERSONS REPRESENTED

George Frederick Austin, called 'Beau Austin'	*Ætat.* 50
John Fenwick, of Allonby Shaw	" 26
Anthony Musgrave, Cornet in the Prince's Own	" 21
Menteith, the Beau's Valet	" 55
A Royal Duke. (Dumb Show.)	
Dorothy Musgrave, Anthony's Sister	" 25
Miss Evelina Foster, her Aunt	" 45
Barbara Ridley, her Maid	" 20
Visitors to the Wells.	

The Time is 1820. The Scene is laid at Tunbridge Wells.
The Action occupies a space of ten hours.

BEAU AUSTIN

MUSICAL INDUCTION: "*Lascia ch'io pianga*"—RINALDO. HANDEL.

ACT I

The Stage represents MISS FOSTER'S *apartments at the Wells. Doors, L. and C.; a window, L. C., looking on the street; a table, R., laid for breakfast.*

SCENE I

BARBARA; *to her* MISS FOSTER

BARBARA (*out of window*). Mr. Menteith! Mr. Menteith! Mr. Menteith!—Drat his old head! Will nothing make him hear?—Mr. Menteith!

MISS FOSTER (*entering*). Barbara! this is incredible: after all my lessons, to be leaning from the window, and calling (for unless my ears deceived me, you were positively calling!) into the street.

BARBARA. Well, madam, just wait until you hear who it was. I declare it was much more for Miss Dorothy and yourself than for me; and if it was a little countrified, I had a good excuse.

MISS FOSTER. Nonsense, child! At least, who was it?

BARBARA. Miss Evelina, I was sure you would ask. Well, what do you think? I was looking out of window at the barber's opposite——

MISS FOSTER. Of which I entirely disapprove——

BARBARA. And first there came out two of the most beautiful——the Royal livery, madam!

MISS FOSTER. Of course, of course: the Duke of York arrived last night. I trust you did not hail the Duke's footmen?

BARBARA. O no, madam, it was after they were gone. Then, who should come out—but you'll never guess!

MISS FOSTER. I shall certainly not try.

BARBARA. Mr. Menteith himself.

MISS FOSTER. Why, child, I never heard of him.

BARBARA. O madam, not the Beau's own gentlemen?

MISS FOSTER. Mr. Austin's servant. No? Is it possible? By that, George Austin must be here.

BARBARA. No doubt of that, madam; they're never far apart. He came out feeling his chin, madam, so; and a packet of letters under his arm, so; and he had the Beau's own walk to that degree you couldn't tell his back from his master's.

MISS FOSTER. My dear Barbara, you too frequently forget yourself. A young woman in your position must beware of levity.

BARBARA. Madam, I know it; but la, what are you to make of me? Look at the time and trouble dear Miss Dorothy was always taking—she that trained up everybody—and see what's come of it; Barbara Ridley I was, and Barbara Ridley I am; and I don't do with fashionable ways—I can't do with them; and indeed, Miss Evelina, I do sometimes wish we were all back again on Edenside, and Mr. Anthony a boy again, and dear Miss Dorothy her old self, galloping the bay mare along the moor, and taking care of all of us as if she was our mother, bless her heart!

MISS FOSTER. Miss Dorothy herself, child? Well, now you mention it, Tunbridge of late has scarcely seemed to suit her constitution. She falls away, has not a word to throw at a dog, and is ridiculously pale. Well, now Mr. Austin has returned after six months of infidelity to the dear Wells, we shall all, I hope, be brightened up. Has the mail come?

BARBARA. That it has, madam, and the sight of Mr. Menteith put it clean out of my head. (*With letters.*) Four for you, Miss Evelina, two for me, and only one for Miss Dorothy. Miss Dorothy seems quite neglected, does she not? Six months ago, it was a different story.

Miss Foster. Well, and that's true, Barbara, and I had not remarked it. I must take her seriously to task. No young lady in her position should neglect her correspondence. (*Opening a letter.*) Here's from that dear ridiculous boy, the Cornet, announcing his arrival for to-day.

Barbara. O madam, will he come in his red coat?

Miss Foster. I could not conceive him missing such a chance. Youth, child, is always vain, and Mr. Anthony is unusually young.

Barbara. La, madam, he can't help that.

Miss Foster. My child, I am not so sure. Mr. Anthony is a great concern to me. He was orphaned, to be sure, at ten years old; and ever since he has been only as it were his sister's son. Dorothy did everything for him: more indeed than I thought quite ladylike, but I suppose I begin to be old-fashioned. See how she worked and slaved—yes, slaved!—for him: teaching him herself, with what pains and patience she only could reveal, and learning that she might be able; and see what he is now: a gentleman, of course, but, to be frank, a very commonplace one: not what I had hoped of Dorothy's brother; not what I had dreamed of the heir of two families—Musgrave and Foster, child! Well, he may now meet Mr. Austin. He requires a Mr. Austin to embellish and correct his manners. (*Opening another letter.*) Why, Barbara, Mr. John Scrope and Miss Kate Dacre are to be married!

Barbara. La, madam, how nice!

Miss Foster. They are: As I'm a sinful woman. And when will you be married, Barbara? and when dear Dorothy? I hate to see old maids a-making.

Barbara. La, Miss Evelina, there's no harm in an old maid.

Miss Foster. You speak like a fool, child: sour grapes are all very well, but it's a woman's business to be married. As for Dorothy, she is five-and-twenty, and she breaks my heart. Such a match, too! Ten thousand to her fortune, the best blood in the north, a most advantageous person, all the graces, the finest sensibility, excellent judgment, the Fos-

ter walk; and all these to go positively a-begging! The men seem stricken with blindness. Why, child, when I came out (and I was the dear girl's image!) I had more swains at my feet in a fortnight than our Dorothy in—O, I cannot fathom it: it must be the girl's own fault.

BARBARA. Why, madam, I did think it was a case with Mr. Austin.

MISS FOSTER. With Mr. Austin? why, how very rustic! The attentions of a gentleman like Mr. Austin, child, are not supposed to lead to matrimony. He is a feature of society: an ornament: a personage: a private gentleman by birth, but a kind of king by habit and reputation. What woman could he marry? Those to whom he might properly aspire are all too far below him. I have known George Austin too long, child, and I understand that the very greatness of his success condemns him to remain unmarried.

BARBARA. Sure, madam, that must be tiresome for him.

MISS FOSTER. Some day, child, you will know better than to think so. George Austin, as I conceive him, and as he is regarded by the world, is one of the triumphs of the other sex. I walked my first minuet with him: I wouldn't tell you the year, child, for worlds; but it was soon after his famous rencounter with Colonel Villiers. He had killed his man, he wore pink and silver, was most elegantly pale, and the most ravishing creature!

BARBARA. Well, madam, I believe that: he is the most beautiful gentleman still.

SCENE II

To these, DOROTHY, L.

DOROTHY (*entering*). Good morning, aunt! Is there anything for me? (*She goes eagerly to table, and looks at letters.*)

MISS FOSTER. Good morrow, niece. Breakfast, Barbara.

DOROTHY (*with letter unopened*). Nothing.

MISS FOSTER. And what do you call that, my dear? (*Sitting.*) Is John Fenwick nobody?

DOROTHY (*looking at letter.*) From John? O yes, so it is. (*Lays down letter unopened, and sits to breakfast,* BARBARA *waiting.*)

MISS FOSTER (*to* BARBARA, *with plate*). Thanks, child; now you may give me some tea. Dolly, I must insist on your eating a good breakfast: I cannot away with your pale cheeks and that Patience-on-a-Monument kind of look. (Toast, Barbara.) At Edenside you ate and drank and looked like Hebe. What have you done with your appetite?

DOROTHY. I don't know, aunt, I'm sure.

MISS FOSTER. Then consider, please, and recover it as soon as you can: to a young lady in your position a good appetite is an attraction—almost a virtue. Do you know that your brother arrives this morning?

DOROTHY. Dear Anthony! Where is his letter, Aunt Evelina? I am pleased that he should leave London and its perils, if only for a day.

MISS FOSTER. My dear, there are moments when you positively amaze me. (Barbara, some *pâté*, if you please!) I beg you not to be a prude. All women, of course, are virtuous; but a prude is something I regard with abhorrence. The Cornet is seeing life, which is exactly what he wanted. You brought him up surprisingly well; I have always admired you for it; but let us admit—as women of the world, my dear—it was no upbringing for a man. You and that fine solemn fellow, John Fenwick, led a life that was positively no better than the Middle Ages; and between the two of you, poor Anthony (who, I am sure, was a most passive creature!) was so packed with principle and admonition that I vow and declare he reminded me of Issachar stooping between his two burdens. It was high time for him to be done with your apron-string, my dear: he has all his wild oats to sow; and that is an occupation which it is unwise to defer too long. By the bye, have you heard the news? The Duke of York has done us a service for which I was unprepared.

(More tea, Barbara!) George Austin, bringing the Prince in his train, is with us once more.

DOROTHY. I knew he was coming.

MISS FOSTER. You knew, child? and did not tell? You are a public criminal.

DOROTHY. I did not think it mattered, Aunt Evelina.

MISS FOSTER. O do not make-believe. I am in love with him myself, and have been any time since Nelson and the Nile. As for you, Dolly, since he went away six months ago, you have been positively in the megrims. I shall date your loss of appetite from George Austin's vanishing. No, my dear, our family require entertainment: we must have wit about us, and beauty, and the *bel air*.

BARBARA. Well, Miss Dorothy, perhaps it's out of my place; but I do hope Mr. Austin will come: I should love to have him see my necklace on.

DOROTHY. Necklace? what necklace? Did he give you a necklace?

BARBARA. Yes, indeed, Miss, that he did: the very same day he drove you in his curricle to Penshurst. You remember, Miss, I couldn't go.

DOROTHY. I remember.

MISS FOSTER. And so do I: I had a touch of—Foster in the blood: the family gout, dears!—And you, you ungrateful nymph, had him a whole day to yourself, and not a word to tell me when you returned.

DOROTHY. I remember. (*Rising.*) Is that the necklace, Barbara? It does not suit you. Give it me.

BARBARA. La, Miss Dorothy, I wouldn't for the world.

DOROTHY. Come, give it me. I want it. Thank you: you shall have my birthday pearls instead.

MISS FOSTER. Why, Dolly, I believe you're jealous of the maid. Foster, Foster: always a Foster trick to wear the willow in anger.

DOROTHY. I do not think, madam, that I am of a jealous habit.

MISS FOSTER. O, the personage is your excuse! And I can tell you, child, that when George Austin was playing

Florizel to the Duchess's Perdita, all the maids in England fell a prey to green-eyed melancholy. It was the *ton*, you see: not to pine for that Sylvander was to resign from good society.

Dorothy. Aunt Evelina, stop! I cannot endure to hear you. What is he after all but just Beau Austin? What has he done—with half a century of good health, what has he done that is either memorable or worthy? Diced and danced and set fashions; vanquished in a drawing-room, fought for a word; what else? As if these were the meaning of life! Do not make me think so poorly of all of us women. Sure, we can rise to admire a better kind of man than Mr. Austin. We are not all to be snared with the eye, dear aunt; and those that are—O! I know not whether I more hate or pity them.

Miss Foster. You will give me leave, my niece: such talk is neither becoming in a young lady nor creditable to your understanding. The world was made a great while before Miss Dorothy Musgrave; and you will do much better to ripen your opinions, and in the meantime read your letter, which I perceive you have not opened. (Dorothy opens *and reads letter.*) Barbara, child, you should not listen at table.

Barbara. Sure, madam, I hope I know my place.

Miss Foster. Then do not do it again.

Dorothy. Poor John Fenwick! he coming here!

Miss Foster. Well, and why not? Dorothy, my darling child, you give me pain. You never had but one chance, let me tell you pointedly: and that was John Fenwick. If I were you, I would not let my vanity so blind me. This is not the way to marry.

Dorothy. Dear aunt, I shall never marry.

Miss Foster. A fiddlestick's end! every one must marry. (*Rising.*) Are you for the Pantiles?

Dorothy. Not to-day, dear.

Miss Foster. Well, well! have your wish, Dolorosa. Barbara, attend and dress me.

SCENE III

Dorothy

Dorothy. How she tortures me, poor aunt, my poor blind aunt; and I—I could break her heart with a word. That she should see nothing, know nothing—there's where it kills. O, it is more than I can bear . . . and yet, how much less than I deserve! Mad girl, of what do I complain? that this dear innocent woman still believes me good, still pierces me to the soul with trustfulness. Alas, and were it otherwise, were her dear eyes opened to the truth, what were left me but death?—He, too—she must still be praising him, and every word is a lash upon my conscience. If I could die of my secret: if I could cease—but one moment cease—this living lie; if I could sleep and forget and be at rest!—Poor John! (*Reading the letter*) he at least is guiltless; and yet for my fault he too must suffer, he too must bear part in my shame. Poor John Fenwick! Has he come back with the old story: with what might have been, perhaps, had we stayed by Edenside? Eden? yes, my Eden, from which I fell. O my old north country, my old river—the river of my innocence, the old country of my hopes—how can I endure to look on you now? And how to meet John?—John, with the old love on his lips, the old honest, innocent, faithful heart! There was a Dorothy once who was not unfit to ride with him, her heart as light as his, her life as clear as the bright rivers we forded; he called her his Diana, he crowned her so with rowan. Where is that Dorothy now? that Diana? she that was everything to John? For O, I did him good; I know I did him good; I will still believe I did him good; I made him honest and kind and a true man; alas, and could not guide myself! And now, how will he despise me! For he shall know; if I die, he shall know all; I could not live, and not be true with him. (*She takes out the necklace and looks at it.*) That he should have bought me from my maid! George, George, that you should have stooped to this! Basely as you have used me,

this is the basest. Perish the witness! (*She treads the trinket under foot.*) Break, break like my heart, break like my hopes, perish like my good name!

SCENE IV

To her, FENWICK

FENWICK (*after a pause*). Is this how you receive me, Dorothy? Am I not welcome?—Shall I go then?

DOROTHY (*running to him, with hands outstretched*). O no, John, not for me. (*Turning, and pointing to the necklace.*) But you find me changed.

FENWICK (*with a movement towards the necklace*). This?

DOROTHY. No, no, let it lie. That is a trinket—broken. But the old Dorothy is dead.

FENWICK. Dead, dear? Not to me.

DOROTHY. Dead to you—dead to all men.

FENWICK. Dorothy, I loved you as a boy. There is not a meadow on Edenside but is dear to me for your sake, not a cottage but recalls your goodness, not a rock nor a tree but brings back something of the best and brightest youth man ever had. You were my teacher and my queen; I walked with you, I talked with you, I rode with you; I lived in your shadow; I saw with your eyes. You will never know, dear Dorothy, what you were to the dull boy you bore with; you will never know with what romance you filled my life, with what devotion, with what tenderness and honour. At night I lay awake and worshipped you; in my dreams I saw you, and you loved me; and you remember, when we told each other stories—you have not forgotten, dearest—that Princess Hawthorn that was still the heroine of mine: who was she? I was not bold enough to tell, but she was you! You, my virgin huntress, my Diana, my queen.

DOROTHY. O silence, silence—pity!

FENWICK. No, dear; neither for your sake nor mine will I be silenced. I have begun; I must go on and finish, and put fortune to the touch. It was from you I learned honour, duty, piety, and love. I am as you made me, and I exist

but to reverence and serve you. Why else have I come here, the length of England, my heart burning higher every mile, my very horse a clog to me? why but to ask you for my wife? Dorothy, you will not deny me.

DOROTHY. You have not asked me about this broken trinket?

FENWICK. Why should I ask? I love you.

DOROTHY. Yet I must tell you. Sit down. (*She picks up the necklace and stands looking at it. Then, breaking down.*) O John, John, it's long since I left home.

FENWICK. Too long, dear love. The very trees will welcome you.

DOROTHY. Ay, John, but I no longer love you. The old Dorothy is dead, God pardon her!

FENWICK. Dorothy, who is the man?

DOROTHY. O poor Dorothy! O poor dead Dorothy! John, you found me breaking this: me, your Diana of the Fells, the Diana of your old romance by Edenside. Diana —O what a name for me! Do you see this trinket? It is a chapter in my life. A chapter, do I say? my whole life, for there is none to follow. John, you must bear with me, you must help me. I have that to tell—there is a secret—I have a secret, John—O for God's sake, understand. That Diana you revered—O John, John, you must never speak of love to me again.

FENWICK. What do you say? How dare you?

DOROTHY. John, it is the truth. Your Diana, even she, she whom you so believed in, she who so believed in herself, came out into the world only to be broken. I met, here at the Wells, a man—why should I tell you his name? I met him, and I loved him. My heart was all his own; yet he was not content with that: he must intrigue to catch me, he must bribe my maid with this. (*Throws the necklace on the table.*) Did he love me? Well, John, he said he did; and be it so! He loved, he betrayed, and he has left me.

FENWICK. Betrayed?

DOROTHY. Ay, even so; I was betrayed. The fault was mine that I forgot our innocent youth, and your honest love.

FENWICK. Dorothy, O Dorothy!

DOROTHY. Yours is the pain; but, O John, think it is for your good. Think in England how many true maids may be waiting for your love, how many that can bring you a whole heart, and be a noble mother to your children, while your poor Diana, at the first touch, has proved all frailty. Go, go and be happy, and let me be patient. I have sinned.

FENWICK. By God, I'll have his blood.

DOROTHY. Stop! I love him. (*Between* FENWICK *and door, C.*)

FENWICK. What do I care? I loved you too. Little he thought of that, little either of you thought of that. His blood—I'll have his blood!

DOROTHY. You shall never know his name.

FENWICK. Know it? Do you think I cannot guess? Do you think I had not heard he followed you? Do you think I had not suffered—O suffered! George Austin is the man. Dear shall he pay it!

DOROTHY (*at his feet*). Pity me; spare me, spare your Dorothy! I love him—love him—love him!

FENWICK. Dorothy, you have robbed me of my happiness, and now you would rob me of my revenge.

DOROTHY. I know it; and shall I ask, and you not grant?

FENWICK (*raising her*). No, Dorothy, you shall ask nothing, nothing in vain from me. You ask his life; I give it you, as I would give you my soul; as I would give you my life, if I had any left. My life is done; you have taken it. Not a hope, not an end; not even revenge. (*He sits.*) Dorothy, you see your work.

DOROTHY. O God, forgive me.

FENWICK. Ay, Dorothy, He will, as I do.

DOROTHY. As you do? Do you forgive me, John?

FENWICK. Ay, more than that, poor soul. I said my life was done, I was wrong; I have still a duty. It is not in vain you have taught me; I shall still prove to you that it was not in vain. You shall soon find that I am no backward friend. Farewell. (*As he goes out, C., the drop falls.*)

MUSICAL INDUCTION: "*The Lass of Richmond Hill.*"

ACT II

The Stage represents GEORGE AUSTIN'S *dressing-room. Elaborate toilet-table, R., with chair; a cheval glass so arranged as to correspond with glass on table. Breakfast-table, L., front. Door, L. The Beau is discovered at table, in dressing-gown, trifling with correspondence.* MENTEITH *is frothing chocolate.*

SCENE I

AUSTIN, MENTEITH

MENTEITH. At the barber's, Mr. George, I had the pleasure of meeting two of the Dook's gentlemen.

AUSTIN. Well, and was his Royal Highness satisfed with his quarters?

MENTEITH. Quite so, Mr. George. Delighted, I believe.

AUSTIN. I am rejoiced to hear it. I wish I could say I was as pleased with my journey, Menteith. This is the first time I ever came to the Wells in another person's carriage; Duke or not, it shall be the last, Menteith.

MENTEITH. Ah, Mr. George, no wonder. And how many times have we made that journey back and forth.

AUSTIN. Enough to make us older than we look.

MENTEITH. To be sure, Mr. George, you do wear well.

AUSTIN. *We* wear well.

MENTEITH. I hear, Mr. George, that Miss Musgrave is of the company.

AUSTIN. Is she so? Well, well! well, well!

MENTEITH. I've not seen the young lady myself, Mr. George; but the barber tells me she's looking poorly.

AUSTIN. Poorly?

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George, poorly was his word.

AUSTIN. Well, Menteith, I am truly sorry. She is not the first.

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George. (*A bell.* MENTEITH *goes out, and re-enters with card.*)

AUSTIN (*with card*). Whom have we here? Anthony Musgrave?

MENTEITH. A fine young man, Mr. George; and with a look of the young lady, but not so gentlemanly.

AUSTIN. You have an eye, you have an eye. Let him in.

SCENE II

AUSTIN, MENTEITH, ANTHONY

AUSTIN. I am charmed to have this opportunity, Mr. Musgrave. You belong to my old corps, I think? And how does my good friend, Sir Frederick? I had his line; but like all my old comrades, he thinks last about himself, and gives me not of his news.

ANTHONY. I protest, sir, this is a very proud moment. Your name is still remembered in the regiment. (AUSTIN *bows.*) The Colonel—he keeps his health, sir, considering his age (AUSTIN *bows again, and looks at* MENTEITH)—tells us young men you were a devil of a fellow in your time.

AUSTIN. I believe I was—in my time. Menteith, give Mr. Musgrave a dish of chocolate. So, sir, we see you at the Wells.

ANTHONY. I have but just alighted. I had but one thought, sir: to pay my respects to Mr. Austin. I have not yet kissed my aunt and sister.

AUSTIN. In my time—to which you refer—the ladies had come first.

ANTHONY. The women? I take you, sir. But then you see, a man's relatives don't count. And besides, Mr. Austin, between men of the world, I am fairly running away from the sex: I am positively in flight. Little Hortense of the Opera; you know; she sent her love to you. She's mad about me, I think. You never saw a creature so fond.

AUSTIN. Well, well, child! you are better here. In my

time—to which you have referred—I knew the lady. Does she wear well?

ANTHONY. I beg your pardon, sir!

AUSTIN. No offence, child, no offence. She was a very lively creature. But you neglect your chocolate, I see?

ANTHONY. We don't patronise it, Mr. Austin; we haven't for some years: the service has quite changed since your time. You'd be surprised.

AUSTIN. Doubtless. I am.

ANTHONY. I assure you, sir, I and Jack Bosbury of the Fifty-Second——

AUSTIN. The Hampshire Bosburys?——

ANTHONY. I do not know exactly, sir. I believe he is related.

AUSTIN. Or perhaps—I remember a Mr. Bosbury, a cutter of coats. I have the vanity to believe I have formed his business.

ANTHONY. I—I hope not, sir. But as I was saying, I and this Jack Bosbury, and the Brummagem Bantam—a very pretty light-weight, sir—drank seven bottles of Burgundy to the three of us inside the eighty minutes. Jack, sir, was a little cut; but me and the Bantam went out and finished the evening on hot gin. Life, sir, life! Tom Cribb was with us. He spoke of you, too, Tom did; said you'd given him a wrinkle for his second fight with the black man. No, sir, I assure you, you're not forgotten.

AUSTIN (*bows*). I am pleased to learn it. In my time, I had an esteem for Mr. Cribb.

ANTHONY. O come, sir! but your time cannot be said to be over.

AUSTIN. Menteith, you hear?

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George.

ANTHONY. The Colonel told me that you liked to shake an elbow. Your big main, sir, with Lord Wensleydale, is often talked about. I hope I may have the occasion to sit down with you. I shall count it an honour, I assure you.

AUSTIN. But would your aunt, my very good friend, approve?

ANTHONY. Why, sir, you do not suppose I am in leading-strings.

AUSTIN. You forget, child: a family must hang together. When I was young—in my time—I was alone; and what I did concerned myself. But a youth who has—as I think you have—a family of ladies to protect, must watch his honour, child, and preserve his fortune. . . . You have no commands from Sir Frederick?

ANTHONY. None, sir, none.

AUSTIN. Shall I find you this noon upon the Pantiles? . . . I shall be charmed. Commend me to your aunt and your fair sister, Menteith?

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George. (*Shows Anthony out.*)

SCENE III

AUSTIN, MENTEITH, *returning*

AUSTIN. Was I ever like that, Menteith?

MENTEITH. No, Mr. George, you was always a gentleman.

AUSTIN. Youth, my fine fellow, youth.

MENTEITH. Quite so, Mr. George.

AUSTIN. Well, Menteith, we cannot make nor mend. We cannot play the jockey with Time. Age is the test: of wine, Menteith, and men.

MENTEITH. Me and you and the old Hermitage, Mr. George, he-he!

AUSTIN. And the best of these, the Hermitage. But come: we lose our day. Help me off with this. (MENTEITH *takes off* AUSTIN'S *dressing-gown;* AUSTIN *passes R. to dressing-table, and takes up first cravat.*)

AUSTIN. Will the hair do, Menteith?

MENTEITH. Never saw it lay better, Mr. George. (AUSTIN *proceeds to wind first cravat. A bell: exit* MENTEITH. AUSTIN *drops first cravat in basket and takes second.*)

AUSTIN (*winding and singing*)—

"I'd crowns resign
To call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill!"

(*Second cravat a failure. Re-enter* MENTEITH *with card.*) Fenwick? of Allonby Shaw? A good family, Menteith, but I don't know the gentleman. (*Lays down card, and takes up third cravat.*) Send him away with every consideration.

MENTEITH. To be sure, Mr. George. (*He goes out. Third cravat a success. Re-enter* MENTEITH.) He says, Mr. George, that he has an errand from Miss Musgrave.

AUSTIN (*with waistcoat*). Show him in, Menteith, at once. (*Singing and fitting waistcoat at glass:*)

"I'd crowns resign
To call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill!"

SCENE IV

AUSTIN, *R. To him* MENTEITH *and* FENWICK

MENTEITH (*announcing*). Mr. Fenwick, Mr. George.

AUSTIN. At the name of Miss Musgrave, my doors fly always open.

FENWICK. I believe, sir, you are acquainted with my cousin, Richard Gaunt?

AUSTIN. The county member? An old and good friend. But you need not go so far afield: I know your good house of Allonby Shaw since the days of the Black Knight. We are, in fact, and at a very royal distance, cousins.

FENWICK. I desired, sir, from the nature of my business, that you should recognize me for a gentleman.

AUSTIN. The preliminary, sir, is somewhat grave.

FENWICK. My business is both grave and delicate.

AUSTIN. Menteith, my good fellow. (*Exit* MENTEITH.) Mr. Fenwick, honour me so far as to be seated. (*They sit.*) I await your pleasure.

FENWICK. Briefly, sir, I am come, not without hope, to appeal to your good heart.

AUSTIN. From Miss Musgrave?

FENWICK. No, sir, I abused her name, and am here upon my own authority. Upon me the consequence.

AUSTIN. Proceed.

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, Dorothy Musgrave is the oldest and dearest of my friends, is the lady whom for ten years it has been my hope to make my wife. She has shown me reason to discard that hope for another: that I may call her Mrs. Austin.

AUSTIN. In the best interests of the lady (*rising*) I question if you have been well inspired. You are aware, sir, that from such interference there is but one issue: to whom shall I address my friend?

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, I am here to throw myself upon your mercy. Strange as my errand is, it will seem yet more strange to you that I came prepared to accept at your hands any extremity of dishonour and not to fight. The lady whom it is my boast to serve has honoured me with her commands. These are my law, and by these your life is sacred.

AUSTIN. Then, sir (*with his hand upon the bell*), this conversation becomes impossible. You have me at too gross a disadvantage; and, as you are a gentleman and respect another, I would suggest that you retire.

FENWICK. Sir, you speak of disadvantage; think of mine. All my life long, with all the forces of my nature, I have loved this lady. I came here to implore her to be my wife, to be my queen; my saint she had been always! She was too noble to deceive me. She told me what you know. I will not conceal that my first mood was of anger: I would have killed you like a dog. But, Mr. Austin—bear with me awhile—I, on the threshold of my life, who have made no figure in the world, nor ever shall now, who had but one treasure, and have lost it—if I, abandoning revenge, trampling upon jealousy, can supplicate you to complete my misfortune—O Mr. Austin! you who have lived, you whose gallantry is

beyond the insolence of a suspicion, you who are a man crowned and acclaimed, who are loved, and loved by such a woman—you who excel me in every point of advantage, will you suffer me to surpass you in generosity?

AUSTIN. You speak from the heart. (*Sits.*) What do you want with me?

FENWICK. Marry her.

AUSTIN. Mr. Fenwick, I am the older man. I have seen much of life, much of society, much of love. When I was young, it was expected of a gentleman to be ready with his hat to a lady, ready with his sword to a man; to honour his word and his king; to be courteous with his equals, generous to his dependants, helpful and trusty in friendship. But it was not asked of us to be quixotic. If I had married every lady by whom it is my fortune—not my merit—to have been distinguished, the Wells would scarce be spacious enough for my establishment. You see, sir, that while I respect your emotion, I am myself conducted by experience. And besides, Mr. Fenwick, is not love a warfare? has it not rules? have not our fair antagonists their tactics, their weapons, their place of arms? and is there not a touch of—pardon me the word! of silliness in one who, having fought, and having vanquished, sounds a parley, and capitulates to his own prisoner? Had the lady chosen, had the fortune of war been other, 'tis like she had been Mrs. Austin. Now! . . . You know the world.

FENWICK. I know, sir, that the world contains much cowardice. To find Mr. Austin afraid to do the right thing, this surprises me.

AUSTIN. Afraid, child?

FENWICK. Yes, sir, afraid. You know her, you know if she be worthy; and you answer me with—the world: the world which has been at your feet: the world which Mr. Austin knows so well how to value and is so able to rule.

AUSTIN. I have lived long enough, Mr. Fenwick, to recognize that the world is a great power. It can make; but it can break.

FENWICK. Sir, suffer me: you spoke but now of friend-

ship, and spoke warmly. Have you forgotten Colonel Villiers?

Austin. Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Fenwick, you forget what I have suffered.

Fenwick. O sir, I know you loved him. And yet, for a random word, you quarrelled; friendship was weighed in vain against the world's code of honour; you fought, and your friend fell. I have heard from others how he lay long in agony, and how you watched and nursed him, and it was in your embrace he died. In God's name have you forgotten that? Was not this sacrifice enough? or must the world, once again, step between Mr. Austin and his generous heart?

Austin. Good God, sir, I believe you are in the right; I believe, upon my soul I believe, there is something in what you say.

Fenwick. Something, Mr. Austin? O credit me, the whole difference betwixt good and evil.

Austin. Nay, nay, but there you go too far. There are many kinds of good: honour is a diamond cut in a thousand facets, and with the true fire in each. Thus, and with all our differences, Mr. Fenwick, you and I can still respect, we can still admire each other. . . . But kindness, ay kindness after all. And with age, to become clement. Yes, ambition first; then, the rounded vanity—victory still novel; and last, as you say, the royal mood of the mature man: to abdicate for others. . . . Sir, you touched me hard about my dead friend; still harder about my living duty; and I am not so young but I can take a lesson. There is my hand upon it: she shall be my wife.

Fenwick. Ah, Mr. Austin, I was sure of it.

Austin. Then, sir, you were vastly mistaken. There is nothing of Beau Austin here. I have simply, my dear child, sate at the feet of Mr. Fenwick.

Fenwick. Ah, sir, your heart was counsellor enough.

Austin. Pardon me. I am vain enough to be the judge: there are but two people in the world who could have wrought this change: yourself and that dear lady. (*Touches*

bell.) Suffer me to dismiss you. One instant of toilet, and I follow. Will you do me the honour to go before, and announce my approach? (*Enter* MENTEITH.)

FENWICK. Sir, if my admiration——

AUSTIN. Dear child, the admiration is the other way. (*Embraces him.* MENTEITH *shows him out.*)

SCENE V

AUSTIN

AUSTIN. Upon my word, I think the world is getting better. We were none of us young men like that—in my time, to quote my future brother. (*He sits down before the mirror.*) Well, here ends Beau Austin. Paris, Rome, Vienna, London—victor everywhere: and now he must leave his bones in Tunbridge Wells. (*Looks at his leg.*) Poor Dolly Musgrave! a good girl after all, and will make me a good wife; none better. The last—of how many?—ay, and the best! Walks like Hebe. But still, here ends Beau Austin. Perhaps it's time. Poor Dolly—was she looking poorly? She shall have her wish. Well, we grow older, but we grow no worse.

SCENE VI

AUSTIN, MENTEITH

AUSTIN. Menteith, I am going to be married.

MENTEITH. Well, Mr. George, but I am pleased to hear it. Miss Musgrave is a most elegant lady.

AUSTIN. Ay, Mr. Menteith? and who told you the lady's name?

MENTEITH. Mr. George, you was always a gentleman.

AUSTIN. You mean I wasn't always? Old boy, you are in the right. This shall be a good change for both you and me. We have lived too long like a brace of truants: now it

the time to draw about the fire. How much is left of the old Hermitage?

MENTEITH. Hard upon thirty dozen, Mr. George, and not a bad cork in the bin.

AUSTIN. And a mistress, Menteith, that's worthy of that wine.

MENTEITH. Mr. George, sir, she's worthy of you.

AUSTIN. Gad, I believe it. (*Shakes hands with him.*)

MENTEITH (*breaking down*). Mr. George, you've been a damned good master to me, and I've been a damned good servant to you; we've been proud of each other from the first; but if you'll excuse my plainness, Mr. George, I never liked you better than to-day.

AUSTIN. Cheer up, old boy, the best is yet to come. Get out the tongs, and curl me like a bridegroom. (*Sits before dressing-glass;* MENTEITH *produces curling irons and plies them.* AUSTIN *sings*)—

"I'd crowns resign
To call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill!"

DROP.

MUSICAL INDUCTION: the "Minuet" from
"Don Giovanni."

ACT III

The stage represents MISS FOSTER'S *lodging as in Act I.*

SCENE I

DOROTHY, *R., at tambour;* ANTHONY, *C., bestriding chair;* MISS FOSTER, *L. C.*

ANTHONY. Yes, ma'am, I like my regiment: we are all gentlemen, from old Fred downwards, and all of a good family. Indeed, so are all my friends, except one tailor sort of fellow, Bosbury. But I'm done with him. I assure you, Aunt Evelina, we are Corinthian to the last degree. I wouldn't shock you ladies for the world——

MISS FOSTER. Don't mind me, my dear; go on.

ANTHONY. Really, ma'am, you must pardon me: I trust I understand what topics are to be avoided among females. And before my sister, too! A girl of her age!

DOROTHY. Why, you dear, silly fellow, I'm old enough to be your mother.

ANTHONY. My dear Dolly, you do not understand; you are not a man of the world. But, as I was going on to say, there is no more spicy regiment in the service.

MISS FOSTER. I am not surprised that it maintains its old reputation. You know, my dear (*to* DOROTHY), it was George Austin's regiment.

DOROTHY. Was it, aunt?

ANTHONY. Beau Austin? Yes, it was; and a precious dust they make about him still—a parcel of old frumps! That's why I went to see him. But he's quite extinct: he couldn't be Corinthian if he tried.

Miss Foster. I am afraid that even at your age George Austin held a very different position from the distinguished Anthony Musgrave.

Anthony. Come, ma'am, I take that unkindly. Of course I know what you're at: of course the old put cut no end of a dash with the Duchess.

Miss Foster. My dear child, I was thinking of no such thing; *that* was immoral.

Anthony. Then you mean that affair at Brighton: when he cut the Prince about Perdita Robinson.

Miss Foster. No, I had forgotten it.

Anthony. O, well, I know—that duel! But look here, Aunt Evelina, I don't think you'd be much gratified after all if I were to be broke for killing my commanding officer about a quarrel at cards.

Dorothy. Nobody asks you, Anthony, to imitate Mr. Austin. I trust you will set yourself a better model. But you may choose a worse. With all his faults, and all his enemies, Mr. Austin is a pattern gentleman. You would not ask a man to be braver, and there are few so generous. I cannot bear to hear him called in fault by one so young. Better judges, dear, are better pleased.

Anthony. Hey-dey! what's this?

Miss Foster. Why, Dolly, this is April and May. You surprise me.

Dorothy. I am afraid, indeed, madam, that you have much to suffer from my caprice. (*She goes out, L.*)

SCENE II

Anthony, Miss Foster

Anthony. What is the meaning of all this, ma'am? I don't like it.

Miss Foster. Nothing, child, that I know. You spoke of Mr. Austin, our dear friend, like a groom; and she, like any lady of taste, took arms in his defence.

ANTHONY. No, ma'am, that won't do. I know the sex. You mark my words, the girl has some confounded nonsense in her head, and wants looking after.

MISS FOSTER. In my presence, Anthony, I shall ask you to speak of Dorothy with greater respect. With your permission, your sister and I will continue to direct our own affairs. When we require the interference of so young and confident a champion, you shall know. (*Curtsies, kisses her hand, and goes out, L.*)

SCENE III

ANTHONY.

ANTHONY. Upon my word, I think Aunt Evelina one of the most uncivil old women in the world. Nine weeks ago I came of age; and they still treat me like a boy. I'm a recognised Corinthian, too: take my liquor with old Fred, and go round with the Brummagem Bantam and Jack Bosb—— . . . O damn Jack Bosbury. If his father was a tailor, he shall fight me for his ungentlemanly conduct. However, that's all one. What I want is to make Aunt Evelina understand that I'm not the man to be put down by an old maid who's been brought up in a work-basket, begad! I've had nothing but rebuffs all day. It's very remarkable. There was that man Austin, to begin with. I'll be hanged if I can stand him. I hear too much of him; and if I can only get a good excuse to put him to the door, I believe it would give Dorothy and all of us a kind of a position. After all, he's not a man to visit in the house of ladies: not when I'm away, at least. Nothing in it of course; but is he a man whose visits I can sanction?

SCENE IV

Anthony, Barbara

Barbara. Please, Mr. Anthony, Miss Foster said I was to show your room.

Anthony. Ha! Baby? Now, you come here. You're a girl of sense, I know.

Barbara. La, Mr. Anthony, I hope I'm nothing of the kind.

Anthony. Come, come! that's not the tone I want: I'm serious. Does this man Austin come much about the house?

Barbara. O Mr. Anthony, for shame! Why don't you ask Miss Foster?

Anthony. Now I wish you to understand: I'm the head of this family. It's my business to look after my sister's reputation, and my aunt's too, begad! That's what I'm here for: I'm their natural protector. And what I want you, Barbara Ridley, to understand—you whose fathers have served my fathers—is just simply this: if you've any common gratitude, you're bound to help me in the work. Now, Barbara, you know me, and you know my Aunt Evelina. She's a good enough woman; I'm the first to say so. But who is she to take care of a young girl? She's ignorant of the world to that degree she believes in Beau Austin! Now you and I, Bab, who are not so high and dry, see through and through him; we know that a man like that is not fit company for any inexperienced girl.

Barbara. O Mr. Anthony, don't say that. (*Weeping.*)

Anthony. Hullo! what's wrong?

Barbara. Nothing that I know of. O Mr. Anthony, I don't think there can be anything.

Anthony. Think? Don't think? What's this?

Barbara. O sir! I don't know, and yet I don't like it. Here's my beautiful necklace all broke to bits; she took it off my very neck, and gave me her birthday pearls instead; and I found it afterwards on the table, all smashed to pieces;

and all she wanted it for was to take and break it. Why that? It frightens me, Mr. Anthony, it frightens me.

ANTHONY (*with necklace*). This? What has this trumpery to do with us?

BARBARA. He gave it me: that's why she broke it.

ANTHONY. He? who?

BARBARA. Mr. Austin did; and I do believe I should not have taken it, Mr. Anthony, but I thought no harm, upon my word of honour. He was always here: that was six months ago; and indeed, indeed, I thought they were to marry. How would I think else with a born lady like Miss Dorothy?

ANTHONY. Why, Barbara, God help us, what's this? You don't mean to say that there was——

BARBARA. Here it is, as true as true: they were going for a jaunt; and Miss Foster had her gout; and I was to go with them; and he told me to make-believe I was ill; and I did; and I stayed at home; and he gave me that necklace; and they went away together; and, oh dear! I wish I'd never been born.

ANTHONY. Together? he and Dolly? Good Lord! my sister! And since then?

BARBARA. We haven't seen him from that day to this, the wicked villain; and, Mr. Anthony, he hasn't so much as written the poor dear a word.

ANTHONY. Bab, Bab, Bab, this is a devil of a bad business; this is a cruel bad business, Baby; cruel upon me, cruel upon all of us; a family like mine. I'm a young man, Barbara, to have this delicate affair to manage; but, thank God, I'm Musgrave to the bone. He bribed a servant-maid, did he? I keep his bribe; it's mine now; dear bought, by George! He shall have it in his teeth. Shot Colonel Villiers, did he? we'll see how he faces Anthony Musgrave. You're a good girl, Barbara; so far you've served the family. You leave this to me. And, hark ye, dry your eyes and hold your tongue: I'll have no scandal raised by you.

BARBARA. I do hope, sir, you won't use me against Miss Dorothy.

ANTHONY. That's my affair; your business is to hold your tongue. Miss Dorothy has made her bed and must lie on it. Here's Jack Fenwick. You can go.

SCENE V

ANTHONY, FENWICK

ANTHONY. Jack Fenwick, is that you? Come here, my boy. Jack, you've given me many a thrashing, and I deserved 'em; and I'll not see you made a fool of now. George Austin is a damned villain, and Dorothy Musgrave is no girl for you to marry: God help me that I should have to say it.

FENWICK. Good God, who told *you?*

ANTHONY. Ay, Jack; it's hard on me, Jack. But you'll stand my friend in spite of this, and you'll take my message to the man, won't you? For it's got to come to blood, Jack: there's no way out of that. And perhaps your poor friend will fall, Jack; think of that: like Villiers. And all for an unworthy sister.

FENWICK. Now, Anthony Musgrave, I give you fair warning; see you take it: one word more against your sister, and we quarrel.

ANTHONY. You let it slip yourself, Jack: you know yourself she's not a virtuous girl.

FENWICK. What do you know of virtue, whose whole boast is to be vicious? How dare you draw conclusions? Dolt and puppy! you can no more comprehend that angel's excellencies than she can stoop to believe in your vices. And you talk morality? Anthony, I'm a man who has been somewhat roughly tried: take care.

ANTHONY. You don't seem able to grasp the situation, Jack. It's very remarkable; I'm the girl's natural protector; and you should buckle to and help, like a friend of the family. And instead of that, begad! you turn on me like all the rest.

FENWICK. Now mark me fairly: Mr. Austin follows at

my heels; he comes to offer marriage to your sister—that is all you know, and all you shall know; and if by any misplaced insolence of yours this marriage should miscarry, you have to answer, not to Mr. Austin only, but to me.

ANTHONY. It's all a most discreditable business, and I don't see how you propose to better it by cutting my throat. Of course if he's going to marry her, it's a different thing; but I don't believe he is, or he'd have asked me. You think me a fool? Well, see they marry, or they'll find me a dangerous fool.

SCENE VI

To these, AUSTIN, BARBARA *announcing*

BARBARA. Mr. Austin. (*She shows* AUSTIN *in, and retires.*)

AUSTIN. You will do me the justice to acknowledge, Mr. Fenwick, that I have been not long delayed by my devotion to the Graces.

ANTHONY. So, sir, I find you in my house——

AUSTIN. And charmed to meet you again. It went against my conscience to separate so soon. Youth, Mr. Musgrave, is to us older men a perpetual refreshment.

ANTHONY. You came here, sir, I suppose, upon some errand?

AUSTIN. My errand, Mr. Musgrave, is to your fair sister. Beauty, as you know, comes before valour.

ANTHONY. In my own house, and about my own sister, I presume I have the right to ask for something more explicit.

AUSTIN. The right, my dear sir, is beyond question; but it is one, as you were going on to observe, on which no gentleman insists.

FENWICK. Anthony, my good fellow, I think we had better go.

ANTHONY. I have asked a question.

AUSTIN. Which I was charmed to answer, but which, on repetition, might begin to grow distasteful.

ANTHONY. In my own house——

FENWICK. For God's sake, Anthony!

AUSTIN. In your aunt's house, young gentleman, I shall be careful to refrain from criticism. I am come upon a visit to a lady: that visit I shall pay; when you desire (if it be possible that you desire it) to resume this singular conversation, select some fitter place. Mr. Fenwick, this afternoon, may I present you to his Royal Highness?

ANTHONY. Why, sir, I believe you must have misconceived me. I have no wish to offend: at least at present.

AUSTIN. Enough, sir. I was persuaded I had heard amiss. I trust we shall be friends.

FENWICK. Come, Anthony, come: here is your sister.

(*As* FENWICK *and* ANTHONY *go out C., enter* DOROTHY, *L.*)

SCENE VII

AUSTIN, DOROTHY

DOROTHY. I am told, Mr. Austin, that you wish to see me.

AUSTIN. Madam, can you doubt of that desire? can you question my sincerity?

DOROTHY. Sir, between you and me these compliments are worse than idle: they are unkind. Sure, we are alone!

AUSTIN. I find you in an hour of cruelty, I fear. Yet you have condescended to receive this poor offender; and having done so much, you will not refuse to give him audience.

DOROTHY. You shall have no cause, sir, to complain of me. I listen.

AUSTIN. My fair friend, I have sent myself—a poor ambassador—to plead for your forgiveness. I have been too long absent; too long, I would fain hope, madam, for you; too long for my honour and my love. I am no longer,

madam, in my first youth; but I may say that I am not unknown. My fortune, originally small, has not suffered from my husbandry. I have excellent health, an excellent temper, and the purest ardour of affection for your person. I found not on my merits, but on your indulgence. Miss Musgrave, will you honour me with your hand in marriage?

DOROTHY. Mr. Austin, if I thought basely of marriage, I should perhaps accept your offer. There was a time, indeed, when it would have made me proudest among women. I was the more deceived, and have to thank you for a salutary lesson. You chose to count me as a cipher in your rolls of conquest; for six months you left me to my fate; and you come here to-day—prompted, I doubt not, by an honourable impulse—to offer this tardy reparation. No: it is too late.

AUSTIN. Do you refuse?

DOROTHY. Yours is the blame: we are no longer equal. You have robbed me of the right to marry any one but you; and do you think me, then, so poor in spirit as to accept a husband on compulsion?

AUSTIN. Dorothy, you loved me once.

DOROTHY. Ay, you will never guess how much: you will never live to understand how ignominious a defeat that conquest was. I loved and trusted you: I judged you by myself; think, then, of my humiliation, when, at, the touch of trial, all your qualities proved false, and I beheld you the slave of the meanest vanity—selfish, untrue, base! Think, sir, what a humbling of my pride to have been thus deceived: to have taken for my idol such a commonplace imposture as yourself; to have loved—yes, loved—such a shadow, such a mockery of man. And now I am unworthy to be the wife of any gentleman; and you—look me in the face, George—are you worthy to be my husband?

AUSTIN. No, Dorothy, I am not. I was a vain fool; I blundered away the most precious opportunity; and my regret will be lifelong. Do me the justice to accept this full confession of my fault. I am here to-day to own and to repair it.

DOROTHY. Repair it? Sir, you condescend too far.

Austin. I perceive with shame how grievously I had misjudged you. But now, Dorothy, believe me, my eyes are opened. I plead with you, not as my equal, but as one in all ways better than myself. I admire you, not in that trivial sense in which we men are wont to speak of women, but as God's work: as a wise mind, a noble soul, and a most generous heart, from whose society I have all to gain, all to learn. Dorothy, in one word, I love you.

Dorothy. And what, sir, has wrought this transformation? You knew me of old, or thought you knew me? Is it in six months of selfish absence that your mind has changed? When did that change begin? A week ago? Sure, you would have written! To-day? Sir, if this offer be anything more than fresh offence, I have a right to be enlightened.

Austin. Madam, I foresaw this question. So be it: I respect, and I will not deceive you. But give me, first of all, a moment for defence. There are few men of my habits and position who would have done as I have done: sate at the feet of a young boy, accepted his lessons, gone upon his errand: fewer still, who would thus, at the crisis of a love, risk the whole fortune of the soul—love, gratitude, even respect. Yet more than that! For conceive how I respect you, if I, whose lifelong trade has been flattery, stand before you and make the plain confession of a truth that must not only lower me, but deeply wound yourself.

Dorothy. What means——?

Austin. Young Fenwick, my rival for your heart, he it was that sent me.

Dorothy. He? O disgrace! He sent you! That was what he meant? Am I fallen so low? Am I your common talk among men? Did you dice for me? Did he kneel? O John, John, how could you! And you, Mr. Austin, whither have you brought me down? shame heaping upon shame—to what end! oh, to what end?

Austin. Madam, you wound me: you look wilfully amiss. Sure, any lady in the land might well be proud to be loved as you are loved, with such nobility as Mr. Fenwick's, with such humility as mine. I came, indeed, in pity, in good-

nature, what you will. (See, dearest lady, with what honesty I speak: if I win you, it shall be with the unblemished truth.) All that is gone. Pity? it is myself I pity. I offer you not love—I am not worthy. I ask, I beseech of you: suffer me to wait upon you like a servant, to serve you with my rank, my name, the whole devotion of my life. I am a gentleman —ay, in spite of my fault—an upright gentleman; and I swear to you that you shall order your life and mine at your free will. Dorothy, at your feet, in remorse, in respect, in love—O such love as I have never felt, such love as I derided —I implore, I conjure you to be mine!

DOROTHY. Too late! too late.

AUSTIN. No, no, not too late: not too late for penitence, not too late for love.

DOROTHY. Which do you propose? that I should abuse your compassion, or reward your treachery? George Austin, I have been your mistress, and I will never be your wife.

AUSTIN. Child, dear child, I have not told you all: there is worse still: your brother knows; the boy as good as told me. Dorothy, this is scandal at the door—O let that move you: for that, if not for my sake, for that, if not for love, trust me, trust me again.

DOROTHY. I am so much the more your victim: that is all, and shall that change my heart? The sin must have its wages. This, too, was done long ago: when you stooped to lie to me. The shame is still mine, the fault still yours.

AUSTIN. Child, child, you kill me: you will not understand. Can you not see? the lad will force me to a duel.

DOROTHY. And you will kill him? Shame after shame, threat upon threat. Marry me, or you are dishonoured; marry me, or your brother dies: and this is man's honour! But my honour and my pride are different. I will encounter all misfortune sooner than degrade myself by an unfaithful marriage. How should I kneel before the altar, and vow to reverence as my husband you, you who deceived me as my lover?

AUSTIN. Dorothy, you misjudge me cruelly; I have deserved it. You will not take me for your husband; why

should I wonder? You are right. I have indeed filled your life with calamity: the wages, ay, the wages, of my sin are heavy upon you. But I have one more thing to ask of your pity; and O remember, child, who it is that asks it: a man guilty in your sight, void of excuse, but old, and very proud, and most unused to supplication. Dorothy Musgrave, will you forgive George Austin?

DOROTHY. O, George!

AUSTIN. It is the old name: that is all I ask, and more than I deserve. I shall remember, often remember, how and where it was bestowed upon me for the last time. I thank you, Dorothy, from my heart; a heart, child, that has been too long silent, but is not too old, I thank God! not yet too old to learn a lesson and to accept a reproof. I will not keep you longer: I will go—I am so bankrupt in credit that I dare not ask you to believe in how much sorrow. But, Dorothy, my acts will speak for me with more persuasion. If it be in my power, you shall suffer no more through me: I will avoid your brother; I will leave this place, I will leave England, to-morrow; you shall be no longer tortured with the neighbourhood of your ungenerous lover. Dorothy, farewell!

SCENE VIII

DOROTHY; *to whom*, ANTHONY, *L.*

DOROTHY (*on her knees, and reaching with her hands.*) George, George! (*Enter* ANTHONY.)

ANTHONY. Ha! what are you crying for?

DOROTHY. Nothing, dear! (*Rising.*)

ANTHONY. Is Austin going to marry you?

DOROTHY. I shall never marry.

ANTHONY. I thought as much. You should have come to me.

DOROTHY. I know, dear, I know; but there was nothing to come about.

ANTHONY. It's a lie. You have disgraced the family.

You went to John Fenwick: see what he has made of it! But I will have you righted: it shall be atoned in the man's blood.

DOROTHY. Anthony! And if I had refused him?

ANTHONY. You? refuse George Austin? You never had the chance.

DOROTHY. I have refused him.

ANTHONY. Dorothy, you lie. You would shield your lover; but this concerns not you only: it strikes my honour and my father's honour.

DOROTHY. I have refused him—refused him, I tell you—refused him. The blame is mine; are you so mad and wicked that you will not see?

ANTHONY. I see this: that man must die.

DOROTHY. He? never! You forget, you forget whom you defy; you run upon your death.

ANTHONY. Ah, my girl, you should have thought of that before. It is too late now.

DOROTHY. Anthony, if I beg you—Anthony, I have tried to be a good sister; I brought you up, dear, nursed you when you were sick, fought for you, hoped for you, loved you—think of it, think of the dear past, think of our home and the happy winter nights, the castles in the fire, the long shining future, the love that was to forgive and suffer always —O you will spare, you will spare me this.

ANTHONY. I will tell you what I will do, Dolly: I will do just what you taught me—my duty: that, and nothing else.

DOROTHY. O Anthony, you also, you to strike me! Heavens, shall I kill them—I—I, that love them, kill them! Miserable, sinful girl! George, George, thank God, you will be far away! O go, George, go at once!

ANTHONY. He goes, the coward! Ay, is this more of your contrivance? Madam, you make me blush. But to-day at least I know where I can find him. This afternoon, on the Pantiles, he must dance attendance on the Duke of York. Already he must be there; and there he is at my mercy.

DOROTHY. Thank God, you are deceived: he will not fight. He promised me that; thank God I have his promise for that.

ANTHONY. Promise! Do you see this? (*producing necklace*) the thing he bribed your maid with? I shall dash it in his teeth before the Duke and before all Tunbridge. Promise, you poor fool? what promise holds against a blow? Get to your knees and pray for him; for, by the God above, if he has any blood in his body, one of us shall die before to-night. (*He goes out.*)

DOROTHY. Anthony, Anthony! . . . O my God, George will kill him.

Music: "Chè farò," as the drop falls.

DROP.

Musical Induction: "Gavotte;" *"IPHIGÉNIE EN AULIDE."* —Glück.

ACT IV

The Stage represents the Pantiles: the alleys fronting the spectators in parallel lines. At the back, a stand of musicians, from which the "Gavotte" is repeated on muted strings. The music continues nearly through Scene I. Visitors walking to and fro beneath the limes. A seat in front, L.

SCENE I

Miss Foster, Barbara, Menteith; *Visitors*

Miss Foster (*entering; escorted by* Menteith, *and followed by* Barbara). And so, Menteith, here you are once more. And vastly pleased I am to see you, my good fellow, not only for your own sake, but because you harbinger the Beau. (*Sits, L.;* Menteith *standing over her.*)

Menteith. Honoured madam, I have had the pleasure to serve Mr. George for more than thirty years. This is a privilege—a very great privilege. I have beheld him in the first societies, moving among the first rank of personages; and none, madam, none outshone him.

Barbara. I assure you madam, when Mr. Menteith took me to the play, he talked so much of Mr. Austin that I couldn't hear a word of Mr. Kean.

Miss Foster. Well, well, and very right. That was the old school of service, Barbara, which you would do well to imitate. This is a child, Menteith, that I am trying to form.

Menteith. Quite so, madam.

Miss Foster. And are we soon to see our princely guest, Menteith?

Menteith. His Royal Highness, madam? I believe I may say quite so. Mr. George will receive our gallant

prince upon the Pantiles (*looking at his watch*) in, I should say, a matter of twelve minutes from now. Such, madam, is Mr. George's order of the day.

BARBARA. I beg your pardon, madam, I am sure, but are we really to see one of His Majesty's own brothers? That will be pure! O madam, this is better than Carlisle.

MISS FOSTER. The wood-note wild: a loyal Cumbrian, Menteith.

MENTEITH. Eh? Quite so, madam.

MISS FOSTER. When she has seen as much of the Royal Family as you, my good fellow, she will find it vastly less entertaining.

MENTEITH. Yes, madam, indeed; in these distinguished circles, life is but a slavery. None of the best set would relish Tunbridge without Mr. George; Tunbridge and Mr. George (if you'll excuse my plainness, madam) are in a manner of speaking identified; and indeed it was the Dook's desire alone that brought us here.

BARBARA. What? the Duke? O dear! was it for that?

MENTEITH. Though, to be sure, madam, Mr. George would always be charmed to find himself (*bowing*) among so many admired members of his own set.

MISS FOSTER. Upon my word, Menteith, Mr. Austin is as fortunate in his servant as his reputation.

MENTEITH. Quite so, madam. But let me observe that the opportunities I have had of acquiring a knowledge of Mr. George's character have been positively unrivalled. Nobody knows Mr. George like his old attendant. The goodness of that gentleman—but, madam, you will soon be equally fortunate, if, as I understand, it is to be a match.

MISS FOSTER. I hope, Menteith, you are not taking leave of your senses. Is it possible you mean my niece?

MENTEITH. Madam, I have the honour to congratulate you. I put a second curl in Mr. George's hair on purpose.

SCENE II

To these, AUSTIN. MENTEITH *falls back, and* AUSTIN *takes his place in front of* MISS FOSTER, *his attitude a counterpart of* MENTEITH'S.

AUSTIN. Madam, I hasten to present my homage.

MISS FOSTER. A truce to compliments! Menteith, your charming fellow there has set me positively crazy. Dear George Austin, is it true? can it be true?

AUSTIN. Madam, if he has been praising your niece he has been well inspired. If he was speaking, as I spoke an hour ago myself, I wish, Miss Foster, that he had held his tongue. I have indeed offered myself to Miss Dorothy, and she, with the most excellent reason, has refused me.

MISS FOSTER. Is it possible? why, my dear George Austin, . . . then I suppose it is John Fenwick after all!

AUSTIN. Not one of us is worthy.

MISS FOSTER. This is the most amazing circumstance. You take my breath away. My niece refuse George Austin? why, I give you my word, I thought she had adored you. A perfect scandal: it positively must not get abroad.

AUSTIN. Madam, for that young lady I have a singular regard. Judge me as tenderly as you can, and set it down, if you must, to an old man's vanity—for, Evelina, we are no longer in the heyday of our youth—judge me as you will: I should prefer to have it known.

MISS FOSTER. Can you? George Austin, you? My youth was nothing; I was a failure; but for you? no, George, you never can, you never must be old. You are the triumph of my generation, George, and of our old friendship too. Think of my first dance and my first partner. And to have this story—no, I could not bear to have it told of you.

AUSTIN. Madam, there are some ladies over whom it is a boast to have prevailed; there are others whom it is a glory to have loved. And I am so vain, dear Evelina, that even thus I am proud to link my name with that of Dorothy Musgrave.

Miss Foster. George you are changed. I would not know you.

Austin. I scarce know myself. But pardon me, dear friend (*taking out his watch*), in less than four minutes our illustrious guest will descend amongst us; and I observe Mr. Fenwick, with whom I have a pressing business. Suffer me, dear Evelina!——

SCENE III

To these, Fenwick. Miss Foster *remains seated, L.* Austin *goes R. to* Fenwick, *whom he salutes with great respect.*

Austin. Mr. Fenwick, I have played and lost. That noble lady, justly incensed at my misconduct, has condemned me. Under the burden of such a loss, may I console myself with the esteem of Mr. Fenwick?

Fenwick. She refused you? Pardon me, sir, but was the fault not yours?

Austin. Perhaps to my shame, I am no novice, Mr. Fenwick; but I have never felt nor striven as to-day. I went upon your errand; but, you may trust me, sir, before I had done I found it was my own. Until to-day I never rightly valued her; sure, she is fit to be a queen. I have a remorse here at my heart to which I am a stranger. Oh! that was a brave life, that was a great heart that I have ruined.

Fenwick. Ay, sir, indeed.

Austin. But, sir, it is not to lament the irretrievable that I intrude myself upon your leisure. There is something to be done, to save, at least to spare, that lady. You did not fail to observe the brother?

Fenwick. No, sir, he knows all; and being both intemperate and ignorant——

Austin. Surely. I know. I have to ask you then to find what friends you can among this company; and if you have none, to make them. Let everybody hear the news. Tell it (if I may offer the suggestion) with humour: how Mr. Aus-

tin, somewhat upon the wane, but still filled with sufficiency, gloriously presumed and was most ingloriously set down by a young lady from the north: the lady's name a secret, which you will permit to be divined. The laugh—the position of the hero—will make it circulate;—you perceive I am in earnest;—and in this way I believe our young friend will find himself forestalled.

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, I would not have dared to ask so much of you; I will go further: were the positions changed, I should fear to follow your example.

AUSTIN. Child, child, you could not afford it.

SCENE IV

To these, the ROYAL DUKE, *C.; then, immediately,* ANTHONY, *L.* FENWICK *crosses to* MISS FOSTER, *R.* AUSTIN *accosts the* DUKE, *C., in dumb show; the muted strings take up a new air, Mozart's "Anglaise"; couples passing under the limes, and forming a group behind* AUSTIN *and the* DUKE. ANTHONY *in front, L., watches* AUSTIN, *who, as he turns from the* DUKE, *sees him, and comes forward with extended hand.*

AUSTIN. Dear child, let me present you to his Royal Highness.

ANTHONY (*with necklace*). Mr. Austin, do you recognise the bribe you gave my sister's maid?

AUSTIN. Hush, sir, hush! you forget the presence of the Duke.

ANTHONY. Mr. Austin, you are a coward and a scoundrel.

AUSTIN. My child, you will regret these words: I refuse your quarrel.

ANTHONY. You do? Take that. (*He strikes* AUSTIN *on the mouth. At the moment of the blow*——)

SCENE V

To these, DOROTHY, *L. U. E.* DOROTHY, *unseen by* AUSTIN, *shrieks. Sensation. Music stops. Tableau.*

AUSTIN (*recovering his composure*). Your Royal Highness, suffer me to excuse the disrespect of this young gentleman. He has so much apology, and I have, I hope, so good a credit, as incline me to accept this blow. But I must beg of your Highness, and, gentlemen, all of you here present, to bear with me while I will explain what is too capable of misconstruction. I am the rejected suitor of this young gentleman's sister; of Miss Dorothy Musgrave: a lady whom I singularly honour and esteem; a word from whom (if I could hope that word) would fill my life with happiness. I was not worthy of that lady; when I was defeated in fair field, I presumed to make advances through her maid. See in how laughable a manner fate repaid me! The waiting-girl derided, the mistress denied, and now comes in this very ardent champion who publicly insults me. My vanity is cured; you will judge it right, I am persuaded, all of you, that I should accept my proper punishment in silence; you, my Lord Duke, to pardon this young gentleman; and you, Mr. Musgrave, to spare me further provocation, which I am determined to ignore.

DOROTHY (*rushing forward, falling at* AUSTIN'S *knees, and seizing his hand*). George, George, it was for me. My hero! take me! What you will!

AUSTIN (*in an agony*). My dear creature, remember that we are in public. (*Raising her.*) Your Royal Highness, may I present you Mrs. George Frederick Austin? (*The Curtain falls on a few bars of the "Lass of Richmond Hill."*)

ADMIRAL GUINEA

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AND

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

DEDICATED

WITH AFFECTION AND ESTEEM

TO

ANDREW LANG

BY

THE SURVIVORS OF THE *WALRUS*

SAVANNAH, this 27th day of
September, 1884

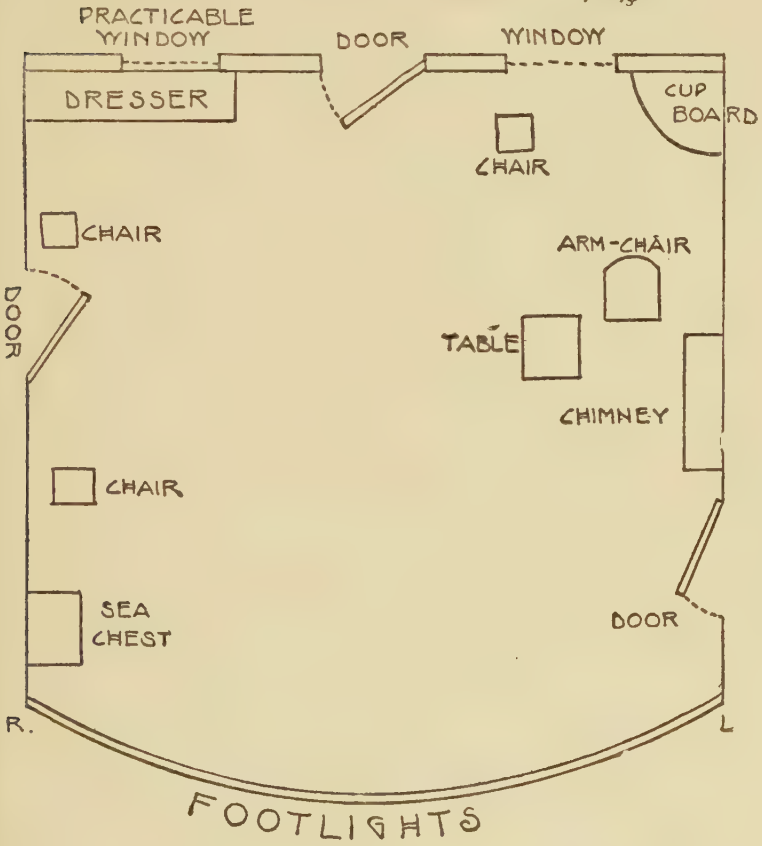
PERSONS REPRESENTED

John Gaunt, called "Admiral Guinea," once captain of the Slaver *Arethusa.*
Arethusa Gaunt, his Daughter.
David Pew, a Blind Beggar, once Boatswain of the *Arethusa.*
Kit French, a Privateersman.
Mrs. Drake, Landlady of the *Admiral Benbow* Inn.

The Scene is laid in the neighbourhood of Barnstaple. The Time is about the year 1760. The Action occupies part of a day and night.

Note.—Passages suggested for omission in representation are enclosed in square brackets, thus [ ].

SET OF STAGE FOR ACTS I., III. & IV.



ADMIRAL GUINEA

ACT I

The Stage represents a room in Admiral Guinea's *house: fireplace, arm-chair, and table with Bible, L., towards the front; door C., with window on each side, the window on the R. practicable; doors, R. and L., back; corner cupboard, a brass-strapped sea-chest fixed to the wall and floor, R.: cutlasses, telescopes, sextant, quadrant, a calendar, and several maps upon the wall; a ship clock; three wooden chairs; a dresser against wall, R. C.; on the chimney-piece the model of a brig and several shells. The centre bare of furniture. Through the windows and the door, which is open, green trees and a small field of sea.*

SCENE I

Arethusa *is discovered, dusting*

Arethusa. Ten months and a week to-day! Now for a new mark. Since the last, the sun has set and risen over the fields and the pleasant trees at home, and on Kit's lone ship and the empty sea. Perhaps it blew; perhaps rained; (*at the chart*) perhaps he was far up here to the nor'ard, where the icebergs sail; perhaps at anchor among these wild islands of the snakes and buccaneers. O, you big chart, if I could see him sailing on you! North and South Atlantic; such a weary sight of water and no land; never an island for the poor lad to land upon. But still, God's there. (*She takes down the telescope to dust it.*) Father's spy-glass again; and my poor Kit perhaps with such another, sweeping the great deep!

SCENE II

Arethusa; *to her*, Kit, *C.* [*He enters on tiptoe, and she does not see or hear him.*]

Arethusa (*dusting telescope*). At sea they have less dust at least: that's so much comfort.

KIT. Sweetheart, ahoy!

ARETHUSA. Kit!

KIT. Arethusa. (*They embrace.*)

ARETHUSA. My Kit! Home again—O my love!—home again to me!

KIT. As straight as wind and tide could carry me!

ARETHUSA. O Kit, my dearest. O Kit—O! O!

KIT. Hey? Steady, lass: steady, I say. For goodness' sake, ease it off.

ARETHUSA. I will, Kit—I will. But you came so sudden.

KIT. I thought ten months of it about preparation enough.

ARETHUSA. Ten months and a week: you haven't counted the days as I have. Another day gone, and one day nearer to Kit: that has been my almanac. How brown you are! how handsome!

KIT. A pity you can't see yourself! Well, no, I'll never be handsome: brown I may be, never handsome. But I'm better than that, if the proverb's true; for I'm ten hundred thousand fathoms deep in love. I bring you a faithful sailor. What! you don't think much of that for a curiosity? Well, that's so: you're right; the rarity is in the girl that's worth it ten times over. Faithful? I couldn't help it if I tried! No, sweetheart, and I fear nothing: I don't know what fear is, but just of losing you. (*Starting.*) Lord, that's not the Admiral?

ARETHUSA. Aha, Mr. Dreadnought! you see you fear my father.

KIT. That I do. But, thank goodness, it's nobody. Kiss me: no, I won't kiss you: kiss *me*. I'll give you a present for that. See!

ARETHUSA. A wedding-ring!

KIT. My mother's. Will you take it?

ARETHUSA. Yes, will I—and give myself for it.

KIT. Ah, if we could only count upon your father! He's a man every inch of him; but he can't endure Kit French.

ARETHUSA. He hasn't learned to know you, Kit, as I have, nor yet do you know him. He seems hard and violent;

at heart he is only a man overwhelmed with sorrow. Why else, when he looks at me and does not know that I observe him, should his face change, and fill with such tenderness, that I could weep to see him? Why, when he walks in his sleep, as he does almost every night, his eyes open and beholding nothing, why should he cry so pitifully on my mother's name? Ah, if you could hear him then, you would say yourself: here is a man that has loved; here is a man that will be kind to lovers.

KIT. Is that so? Ay, it's a hard thing to lose your wife; ay, that must cut the heart indeed. But for all that, my lass, your father is keen for the doubloons.

ARETHUSA. Right, Kit: and small blame to him. There is only one way to be honest, and the name of that is thrift.

KIT. Well, and that's my motto. I've left the ship; no more letter of marque for me. Good-bye to Kit French, privateersman's mate; and how-d'ye-do to Christopher, the coasting skipper. I've seen the very boat for me: I've enough to buy her, too; and to furnish a good house, and keep a shot in the locker for bad luck. So far, there's nothing to gainsay. So far it's hopeful enough; but still there's Admiral Guinea, you know—and the plain truth is that I'm afraid of him.

ARETHUSA. Admiral Guinea? Now, Kit, if you are to be true lover of mine, you shall not use that name. His name is Captain Gaunt. As for fearing him, Kit French, you're not the man for me, if you fear anything but sin. He's a stern man because he's in the right.

KIT. He is a man of God; I am what he calls a child of perdition. I was a privateersman—serving my country, I say; but he calls it pirate. He is thrifty and sober; he has a treasure, they say, and it lies so near his heart that he tumbles up in his sleep to stand watch over it. What has a harum-scarum dog like me to expect from a man like him? He won't see I'm starving for a chance to mend; "Mend," he'll say; "I'll be shot if you mend at the expense of my daughter;" and the worst of it is, you see, he'll be right.

ARETHUSA. Kit, if you dare to say that faint-hearted

word again, I'll take my ring off. What are we here for but to grow better or grow worse? Do you think Arethusa French will be the same as Arethusa Gaunt?

KIT. I don't want her better.

ARETHUSA. Ah, but she shall be!

KIT. Hark, here he is! By George, it's neck or nothing now. Stand by to back me up.

SCENE III

To these, GAUNT, *C.*

KIT (*with* ARETHUSA'S *hand*). Captain Gaunt, I have come to ask you for your daughter.

GAUNT. Hum. (*He sits in his chair, L.*)

KIT. I love her, and she loves me, sir. I've left the privateering. I've enough to set me up and buy a tidy sloop—Jack Lee's; you know the boat, Captain; clinker built, not four years old, eighty tons burthen, steers like a child. I've put my mother's ring on Arethusa's finger; and if you'll give us your blessing, I'll engage to turn over a new leaf, and make her a good husband.

GAUNT. In whose strength, Christopher French?

KIT. In the strength of my good, honest love for her: as you did for her mother, and my father for mine. And you know, Captain, a man can't command the wind; but (excuse me, sir) he can always lie the best course possible, and that's what I'll do, so God help me.

GAUNT. Arethusa, you at least are the child of many prayers; your eyes have been unsealed; and to you the world stands naked, a morning watch for duration, a thing spun of cobwebs for solidity. In the presence of an angry God, I ask you: have you heard this man?

ARETHUSA. Father, I know Kit, and I love him.

GAUNT. I say it solemnly, this is no Christian union. To you, Christopher French, I will speak nothing of eternal truths: I will speak to you the language of this world. You

have been trained among sinners who gloried in their sin: in your whole life you never saved one farthing; and now, when your pockets are full, you think you can begin, poor dupe, in your own strength. You are a roysterer, a jovial companion; you mean no harm—you are nobody's enemy but your own. No doubt you tell this girl of mine, and no doubt you tell yourself, that you can change. Christopher, speaking under correction, I defy you! You ask me for this child of many supplications, for this brand plucked from the burning: I look at you; I read you through and through; and I tell you—no! (*Striking table with his fist.*)

KIT. Captain Gaunt, if you mean that I am not worthy of her, I'm the first to say so. But, if you'll excuse me, sir, I'm a young man, and young men are no better'n they ought to be; it's known; they're all like that; and what's their chance? To be married to a girl like this! And would you refuse it to me? Why, sir, you yourself, when you came courting, you were young and rough; and yet I'll make bold to say that Mrs. Gaunt was a happy woman, and the saving of yourself into the bargain. Well, now Captain Gaunt, will you deny another man, and that man a sailor, the very salvation that you had yourself?

GAUNT. Salvation, Christopher French, is from above.

KIT. Well, sir, that is so; but there's means, too; and what means so strong as the wife a man has to strive and toil for, and that bears the punishment whenever he goes wrong? Now, sir, I've spoke with your old shipmates in the Guinea trade. Hard as nails, they said, and true as the compass: as rough as a slaver, but as just as a judge. Well, sir, you hear me plead: I ask you for my chance; don't you deny it to me.

GAUNT. You speak of me? In the true balances we both weigh nothing. But two things I know: the depth of iniquity, how foul it is; and the agony with which a man repents. Not until seven devils were cast out of me did I awake; each rent me as it passed. Ay, that was repentance. Christopher, Christopher, you have sailed before the wind since first you weighed your anchor, and now you think to

sail upon a bowline? You do not know your ship, young man: you will go to le'ward like a sheet of paper; I tell you so that know—I tell you so that have tried, and failed, and wrestled in the sweat of prayer, and at last, at last, have tasted grace. But, meanwhile, no flesh and blood of mine shall lie at the mercy of such a wretch as I was then, or as you are this day. I could not own the deed before the face of heaven if I sanctioned this unequal yoke. Arethusa, pluck off that ring from off your finger. Christopher French, take it, and go hence.

KIT. Arethusa, what do you say?

ARETHUSA. O Kit, you know my heart. But he is alone, and I am his only comfort; and I owe all to him; and shall I not obey my father? But, Kit, if you will let me, I will keep your ring. Go, Kit; go, and prove to my father that he was mistaken; go and win me. And O, Kit, if ever you should weary, come to me—no, do not come! but send a word —and I shall know all, and you shall have your ring. (GAUNT *opens his Bible and begins to read.*)

KIT. Don't say that, don't say such things to me; I sink or swim with you. (*To* GAUNT.) Old man, you've struck me hard; give me a good word to go with. Name your time; I'll stand the test. Give me a spark of hope, and I'll fight through for it. Say just this—"Prove I was mistaken," and by George, I'll prove it.

GAUNT (*looking up*). I make no such compacts. Go, and swear not at all.

ARETHUSA. Go, Kit! I keep the ring.

SCENE IV

ARETHUSA, GAUNT

ARETHUSA. Father, what have we done that you should be so cruel?

GAUNT (*laying down Bible, and rising*). Do you call me cruel? You speak after the flesh. I have done you this

day a service that you will live to bless me for upon your knees.

ARETHUSA. He loves me, and I love him: you can never alter than; do what you will, father, that can never change. I love him, I believe in him, I will be true to him.

GAUNT. Arethusa, you are the sole thing death has left me on this earth; and I must watch over your carnal happiness and your eternal weal. You do not know what this implies to me. Your mother—my Hester—tongue cannot tell, nor heart conceive the pangs she suffered. If it lies in me, your life shall not be lost on that same reef of an ungodly husband. (*Goes out, C.*)

SCENE V

ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA. I thought the time dragged long and weary when I knew that Kit was homeward bound, all the white sails a-blowing out towards England, and my Kit's face turned this way? (*She begins to dust.*) Sure, if my mother were here, she would understand and help us; she would understand a young maid's heart, though her own had never an ache; and she would love my Kit. (*Putting back the telescope.*) To think she died: husband and child—and so much love—she was taken from them all. Ah, there is no parting but the grave! And Kit and I both live, and both love each other; and here am I cast down? O, Arethusa, shame! And your love home from the deep seas, and loving you still; and the sun shining; and the world all full of hope? O, hope, you're a good word!

SCENE VI

ARETHUSA; *to her*, PEW

PEW (*singing without*):

"Time for us to go,
Time for us to go,
And we'll keep the brig three p'ints away,
For it's time for us to go."

ARETHUSA. Who comes here? a seaman by his song, and father out! (*She tries the air.*) "Time for us to go!" It sounds a wild kind of song. (*Tap-tap;* PEW *passes the window.*) O, what a face—and blind!

PEW (*entering*). Kind Christian friends, take pity on a poor blind mariner, as lost his precious sight in the defence of his native country, England, and God bless King George!

ARETHUSA. What can I do for you, sailor?

PEW. Good Christian lady, help a poor blind mariner to a mouthful of meat. I've served His Majesty in every quarter of the globe; I've spoke with 'Awke and glorious Anson, as I might with you; and I've tramped it all night long, upon my sinful feet, and with a empty belly.

ARETHUSA. You shall not ask bread and be denied by a sailor's daughter and a sailor's sweetheart; and when my father returns he shall give you something to set you on your road.

PEW. Kind and lovely lady, do you tell me that you are in a manner speaking alone? or do my ears deceive a poor blind seaman?

ARETHUSA. I live here with my father, and my father is abroad.

PEW. Dear, beautiful, Christian lady, tell a poor blind man your honoured name, that he may remember it in his poor blind prayers.

ARETHUSA. Sailor, I am Arethusa Gaunt.

PEW. Sweet lady, answer a poor blind man one other

question: are you in a manner of speaking related to Cap'n John Gaunt? Cap'n John as in the ebony trade were known as Admiral Guinea?

ARETHUSA. Captain John Gaunt is my father.

PEW (*dropping the blind man's whine*). Lord, think of that now! They told me this was where he lived, and so it is. And here's old Pew, old David Pew, as was the Admiral's own bo-sun, colloguing in his old commander's parlour, with his old commander's gal (*seizes* ARETHUSA). Ah, and a bouncer you are, and no mistake.

ARETHUSA. Let me go! how dare you?

PEW. Lord love you, don't you struggle, now, don't you (*She escapes into front R. corner, where he keeps her imprisoned*). Ah, well, we'll get you again, my lovely woman. What a arm you've got—great god of love—and a face like a peach! I'm a judge, I am. (*She tries to escape; he stops her.*) No, you don't; O, I can hear a flea jump! But it's here where I miss my deadlights. Poor old Pew; him as the ladies always would have for their fancy man and take no denial; here you are with your commander's daughter close aboard, and you can't so much as guess the colour of her lovely eyes. (*Singing*):

"Be they black like ebony,
Or be they blue like to the sky."

Black like the Admiral's? or blue like his poor dear wife's? Ah, I was fond of that there woman, I was: the Admiral was jealous of me. Arethusa, my dear,—my heart, what a 'and and arm you *have* got; I'll dream o' that 'and and arm, I will!—but as I was a-saying, does the Admiral ever in a manner of speaking refer to his old bo'sun David Pew? him as he fell out with about the black woman at Lagos, and almost slashed the shoulder off of him one morning before breakfast?

ARETHUSA. You leave this house.

PEW. Hey? (*He closes and seizes her again.*) Don't you fight, my lovely one: now don't make old blind Pew

forget his manners before a female. What! you will? stop that, or I'll have the arm right out of your body. (*He gives her arm a wrench.*)

ARETHUSA. O! help, help!

PEW. Stash your patter, damn you. (ARETHUSA *gives in.*) Ah, I thought it: Pew's way, Pew's way. Now, look you here, my lovely woman. If you sling in another word that isn't in answer to my questions, I'll pull your j'ints out one by one. Where's the Commander?

ARETHUSA. I have said: he is abroad.

PEW. When is he coming aboard again?

ARETHUSA. At any moment.

PEW. Does he keep his strength?

ARETHUSA. You'll see when he returns. (*He wrenches her arm again.*) Ah!

PEW. Is he still on piety?

ARETHUSA. O, he is a Christian man!

PEW. A Christian man, is he? Where does he keep his rum?

ARETHUSA. Nay, you shall steal nothing by my help.

PEW. No more I shall (*becoming amorous.*) You're a lovely woman, that's what you are; how would you like old Pew for a sweetheart, hey? He's blind, is Pew, but strong as a lion; and the sex is his 'ole delight. Ah, them beautiful, beautiful lips! A kiss! Come!

ARETHUSA. Leave go, leave go!

PEW. Hey? you would?

ARETHUSA. Ah! (*She thrusts him down, and escapes to door, R.*)

SCENE VII

PEW (*picking himself up.*) Ah, she's a bouncer, she is! Where's my stick? That's the sort of female for David Pew. Didn't she fight? and didn't she struggle? and shouldn't I like to twist her lovely neck for her? Pew's way with 'em all: the prettier they was, the uglier he were to 'em. Pew's way: a way he had with him; and a damned

good way too. (*Listens at L. door.*) That's her bedroom, I reckon; and she's double-locked herself in. Good again; it's a crying mercy the Admiral didn't come in. But you always loses your 'ed, Pew, with a female: that's what charms 'em. Now for business. The front door. No bar; on'y a big lock (*trying keys from his pocket*). Key one; no go; Key two; no go. Key three; ah, that does it. Ah! (*feeling key*) him with the three wards and the little 'un: good again! Now if I could only find a mate in this rotten country 'amlick: one to be eyes to me; I can steer, but I can't conn myself, worse luck! If I could only find a mate! and tonight, about three bells in the middle watch, old Pew will take a little cruise, and lay aboard his ancient friend the Admiral; or, barring that, the Admiral's old sea-chest—the chest he kept the shiners in aboard the brig. Where is it, I wonder? in his berth, or in the cabin here? It's big enough, and the brass bands is plain to feel by. (*Searching about with stick.*) Dresser—chair—(*knocking his head on the cupboard*). Ah!—O, corner cupboard. Admiral's chair—Admiral's table—Admiral's—hey! what's this?—a book—sheepskin—smells like a 'oly Bible. Chair (*his stick just avoids the chest*). No sea-chest. I must have a mate to see for me, to see for old Pew: him as had eyes like a eagle! Meanwhile, rum. Corner cupboard, of course (*tap-tapping*). Rum—rum—rum. Hey? (*He listens.*) Footsteps. Is it the Admiral? (*With the whine.*) Kind Christian friends——

SCENE VIII

PEW; *to him* GAUNT

GAUNT. What brings you here?

PEW. Cap'n, do my ears deceive me? or is this my old commander?

GAUNT. My name is John Gaunt. Who are you, my man, and what's your business?

PEW. Here's the facks, so help me. A lovely female in

this house was Christian enough to pity the poor blind; and lo and be'old! who should she turn out to be but my old commander's daughter! "My dear," says I to her, "I was the Admiral's own particular bo'sun."—"La, sailor," she says to me, "how glad he'll be to see you!"—"Ah," says I, "won't he just—that's all."—"I'll go and fetch him," she says; "you make yourself at 'ome." And off she went; and, Commander, here I am.

GAUNT (*sitting down*). Well?

PEW. Well, Cap'n?

GAUNT. What do you want?

PEW. Well, Admiral, in a general way, what I want in a manner of speaking is money and rum. (*A pause.*)

GAUNT. David Pew, I have known you a long time.

PEW. And so you have; aboard the old *Arethusa;* and you don't seem that cheered up as I'd looked for, with an old shipmate dropping in, one as has been seeking you two years and more—and blind at that. Don't you remember the old chantie?—

"Time for us to go,
Time for us to go,
And when we'd clapped the hatches on,
'Twas time for us to go."

What a note you had to sing, what a swaller for a pannikin of rum, and what a fist for the shiners! Ah, Cap'n, they didn't call you Admiral Guinea for nothing. I can see that old sea-chest of yours—her with the brass bands, where you kept your gold dust and doubloons: you know!—I can see her as well this minute as though you and me was still at it playing put on the lid of her. . . . You don't say nothing, Cap'n? . . . Well, here it is: I want money and I want rum. You don't know what it is to want rum, you don't: it gets to that p'int that you would kill a 'ole ship's company for just one guttle of it. What? Admiral Guinea, my old Commander, go back on poor old Pew? and him high and dry? Not you! When we had words over the negro lass at Lagos, what did you do? fair dealings was your word: fair as between man and man; and we had it out

with p'int and edge on Lagos sands. And you're not going back on your word to me, now I'm old and blind? No, no! belay that, I say. Give me the old motto: Fair dealings, as between man and man.

GAUNT. David Pew, it were better for you that you were sunk in fifty fathom. I know your life; and first and last, it is one broadside of wickedness. You were a porter in a school, and beat a boy to death; you ran for it, turned slaver, and shipped with me, a green hand. Ay, that was the craft for you: that was the right craft, and I was the right captain; there was none worse that sailed to Guinea. Well, what came of that? In five years' time you made yourself the terror and abhorrence of your messmates. The worst hands detested you; your captain—that was me, John Gaunt, the chief of sinners—cast you out for a Jonah. Who was it stabbed the Portuguese and made off inland with his miserable wife? Who, raging drunk on rum, clapped fire to the barracoons and burned the poor soulless creatures in their chains? Ay, you were a scandal to the Guinea coast, from Lagos down to Calabar; and when at last I sent you ashore, a marooned man—your shipmates, devils as they were, cheering and rejoicing to be quit of you—by heaven, it was a ton's weight off the brig!

PEW. Cap'n Gaunt, Cap'n Gaunt, these are ugly words.

GAUNT. What next? You shipped with Flint the Pirate. What you did then I know not; the deep seas have kept the secret: kept it, ay, and will keep against the Great Day. God smote you with blindness, but you heeded not the sign. That was His last mercy; look for no more. To your knees, man, and repent. Pray for a new heart; flush out your sins with tears; flee while you may from the terrors of the wrath to come.

PEW. Now, I want this clear: Do I understand that you're going back on me, and you'll see me damned first?

GAUNT. Of me you shall have neither money nor strong drink: not a guinea to spend in riot; not a drop to fire your heart with deviltry.

PEW. Cap'n, do you think it wise to quarrel with me?

I put it to you now, Cap'n, fairly as between man and man —do you think it wise?

GAUNT. I fear nothing. My feet are on the Rock. Begone! (*He opens the Bible and begins to read.*)

PEW (*after a pause*). Well, Cap'n, you know best, no doubt; and David Pew's about the last man, though I says it, to up and thwart an old Commander. You've been 'ard on David Pew, Cap'n: 'ard on the poor blind; but you'll live to regret it—ah, my Christian friend, you'll live to eat them words up. But there's no malice here: that ain't Pew's way; here's a sailor's hand upon it. . . . You don't say nothing? (GAUNT *turns a page.*) Ah, reading, was you? Reading, by thunder! Well, here's my respecks (*singing*):

"Time for us to go,
Time for us to go,
When the money's out, and the liquor's done,
Why, it's time for us to go."

(*He goes tapping up to door, turns on the threshold, and listens.* GAUNT *turns a page.* PEW, *with a grimace, strikes his hand upon the pocket with the keys, and goes.*)

DROP.

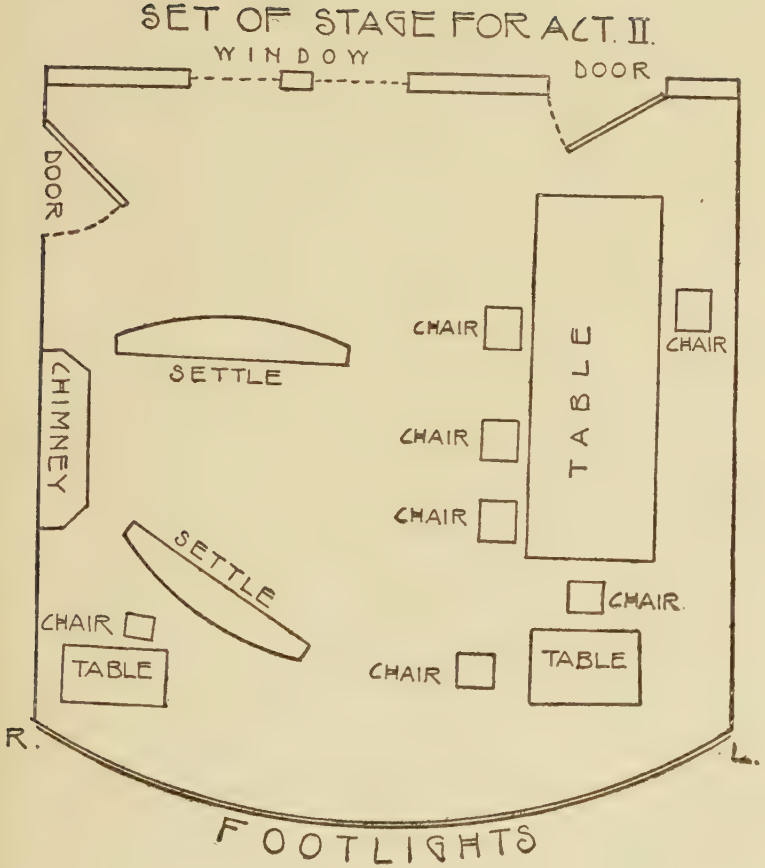

SET OF STAGE FOR ACT. II.
WINDOW
DOOR
DOOR
CHIMNEY
SETTLE
SETTLE
CHAIR
CHAIR
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TABLE
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CHAIR
CHAIR
TABLE
CHAIR
TABLE
CHAIR
R.
L.
FOOTLIGHTS

ACT II

The Stage represents the parlour of the "ADMIRAL BENBOW" inn. Fire-place, R., with high-backed settles on each side; in front of these, and facing the audience, R., a small table laid with a cloth. Tables, L., with glasses, pipes, etc. Broadside ballads on the wall. Outer door of inn, with half-door in L., corner back; door R., beyond the fire-place; window with red half-curtains; spittoons; candles on both the front tables; night without.

SCENE I

PEW; *afterwards* MRS. DRAKE, *out and in*

PEW (*entering.*) Kind Christian friends——(*listening; then dropping the whine*). Hey? nobody! Hey? A grog-shop not two-cable-lengths from the Admiral's back-door, and the Admiral not there? I never knew a seaman brought so low: he ain't but the bones of the man he used to be. Bear away for the New Jerusalem, and this is what you run aground on, is it? Good again; but it ain't Pew's way; Pew's way is rum.—Sanded floor. Rum is his word, and rum his motion.—Settle—chimbley—settle again—spittoon—table rigged for supper. Table—glass. (*Drinks heel-tap.*) Brandy and water; and not enough of it to wet your eye; damn all greediness, I say. Pot (*drinks*), small beer—a drink that I ab'or like bilge! What I want is rum. (*Calling, and rapping with stick on table.*) Halloa, there! House, ahoy!

MRS. DRAKE (*without*). Coming, sir, coming. (*She enters, R.*) What can I do——? (*Seeing* PEW.) Well I never did! Now, beggar-man, what's for you?

PEW. Rum, ma'am, rum; and a bit o' supper.

MRS. DRAKE. And a bed to follow, I shouldn't wonder!

PEW. *And* a bed to follow: *if* you please.

MRS. DRAKE. This is the "*Admiral Benbow,*" a respect-

able house, and receives none but decent company; and I'll ask you to go somewhere else, for I don't like the looks of you.

PEW. Turn me away? Why, Lord love you, I'm David Pew—old David Pew—him as was Benbow's own particular cox'n. You wouldn't turn away old Pew from the sign of his late commander's 'ed? Ah, my British female, you'd have used me different if you'd seen me in the fight! There laid old Benbow, both his legs shot off, in a basket, and the blessed spy-glass at his eye to that same hour: a picter, ma'am, of naval daring: when a round shot come, and took and knocked a bucketful of shivers right into my poor daylights. "Damme," says the Admiral, "is that old Pew, *my* old Pew?" he says.—"It's old Pew, sir," says the first lootenant, "worse luck," he says.—"Then damme," says Admiral Benbow, "if that's how they serve a lion-'arted seaman, damme if I care to live," he says; and, ma'am, he laid down his spy-glass.

MRS. DRAKE. Blind man, I don't fancy you, and that's the truth; and I'll thank you to take yourself off.

PEW. Thirty years have I fought for country and king, and now in my blind old age I'm to be sent packing from a measly public 'ouse? Mark ye, ma'am, if I go, you take the consequences. Is this a inn? Or hain't it? If it is a inn, then by act of parleyment, I'm free to sling my 'ammick. Don't you forget: this is a act of parleyment job, this is. You look out.

MRS. DRAKE. Why, what's to do with the man and his acts of parliament? I don't want to fly in the face of an act of parliament, not I. If what you say is true——

PEW. True? If there's anything truer than a act of parleyment—Ah! you ask the beak. True? I've that in my 'art as makes me wish it wasn't.

MRS. DRAKE. I don't like to risk it. I don't like your looks, and you're more sea-lawyer than seaman to my mind. But I'll tell you what: if you can pay, you can stay. So there.

PEW. No chink, no drink? That's your motto, is it? Well,

that's sense. Now, look here, ma'am, I ain't beautiful like you; but I'm good, and I'll give you warrant for it. Get me a noggin of rum, and suthin' to scoff, and a penny pipe, and a half-a-foot of baccy; and there's a guinea for the reckoning. There's plenty more in the locker; so bear a hand, and be smart. I don't like waiting; it ain't my way. (*Exit* MRS. DRAKE, *R.* PEW *sits at the table, R. The settle conceals him from all the upper part of the stage.*)

MRS. DRAKE (*re-entering*). Here's the rum, sailor.

PEW (*drinks*). Ah, rum! That's my sheet anchor: rum and the blessed Gospel. Don't you forget that, ma'am: rum and the Gospel is old Pew's sheet-anchor. You can take for another while you're about it; and, I say, short reckonings make long friends, hey? Where's my change?

MRS. DRAKE. I'm counting it now. There, there it is, and thank you for your custom. (*She goes out, R.*)

PEW (*calling after her*). Don't thank me, ma'am; thank the act of parleyment! Rum, fourpence; two penny pieces and a Willi'm-and-Mary tizzy makes a shilling; and a spade half-guinea is eleven and six (*re-enter* MRS. DRAKE *with supper, pipe, etc.*); and a blessed Majesty George the First crownpiece makes sixteen and six; and two shilling bits is eighteen and six; and a new half-crown makes—no it don't! O, no! Old Pew's too smart a hand to be bammed with a soft half-tusheroon.

MRS. DRAKE (*changing piece*). I'm sure I didn't know it, sailor.

PEW (*trying new coin between his teeth*). In course you didn't, my dear; but I did, and I thought I'd mention it. Is that my supper, hey? Do my nose deceive me? (*Sniffing and feeling.*) Cold duck? sage and onions? a round of double Gloster? and that noggin o' rum? Why, I declare if I'd stayed and took potluck with my old commander, Cap'n John Gaunt, he couldn't have beat this little spread, as I've got by act of parleyment.

MRS. DRAKE (*at knitting*). Do you know the captain, sailor?

PEW. Know him? I was that man's bo'sun, ma'am. In

the Guinea trade, we was known as " Pew's Cap'n," and " Gaunt's Bo'sun," one for other like. We was like two brothers, ma'am. And a excellent cold duck, to be sure; and the rum lovely.

Mrs. Drake. If you know John Gaunt, you know his daughter Arethusa.

Pew. What? Arethusa? Know her, says you? know her? Why, Lord love you, I was her god-father. " Pew," says Jack Gaunt to me, " Pew," he says, " you're a man," he says; " I like a man to be a man," says he, " and damme," he says, " I like *you;* and sink me," says he, " if you don't promise and vow in the name of that new-born babe," he says, " why damme, Pew," says he, " you're not the man I take you for." Yes, ma'am, I named that female; with my own 'ands, I did; Arethusa, I named her; that was the name I give her; so now you know if I speak true. And if you'll be as good as get me another noggin of rum, why, we'll drink her 'elth with three times three. (*Exit* Mrs. Drake: Pew *eating.* Mrs. Drake *re-entering with rum.*)

Mrs. Drake. If what you say be true, sailor (and I don't say it isn't, mind!), it's strange that Arethusa and that godly man her father have never so much as spoke your name.

Pew. Why, that's so! And why, says you? Why, when I dropped in and paid my respecks this morning, do you think she knew me? No more'n a babe unborn! Why, ma'am, when I promised and vowed for her, I was the picter of a man-o'-war's man, I was: eye like a eagle; walked the deck in a hornpipe, foot up and foot down; v'ice as mellow as rum; 'and upon 'art, and all the females took dead aback at the first sight, Lord bless 'em! Know me? Not likely. And as for me, when I found her such a lovely woman—by the feel of her 'and and arm—you might have knocked me down with a feather. But here's where it is, you see: when you've been knocking about on blue water for a matter of two and forty year, shipwrecked here, and blown up there, and everywhere out of luck, and given over for dead by all your messmates and relations, why what it amounts to is

this: nobody knows you, and you hardly knows yourself, and there you are; and I'll trouble you for another noggin of rum.

MRS. DRAKE. I think you have had enough.

PEW. I don't; so bear a hand. (*Exit* MRS. DRAKE; PEW *empties the glass.*) Rum, ah, rum, you're a lovely creature; they haven't never done you justice. (*Proceeds to fill and light pipe; re-enter* MRS. DRAKE *with rum.*) And now, ma'am, since you're so genteel and amicable-like, what about my old commander? Is he, in a manner of speaking, on half pay? or is he living on his fortune like a gentleman slaver ought?

MRS. DRAKE. Well, sailor, people talk, you know.

PEW. I know, ma'am; I'd been rolling in my coach, if they'd have held their tongues.

MRS. DRAKE. And they do say that Captain Gaunt, for so pious a man, is little better than a miser.

PEW. Don't say it, ma'am; not to old Pew. Ah, how often have I up and strove with him! "Cap'n, live it down," says I. "Ah, Pew," says he, "you're a better man than I am," he says; "but damme," he says, "money," he says, "is like rum to me." (*Insinuating.*) And what about a old sea-chest, hey? A old sea-chest, strapped with brass bands?

MRS. DRAKE. Why, that'll be the chest in his parlour, where he has it bolted to the wall, as I've seen with my own eyes; and so might you, if you had eyes to see with.

PEW. No, ma'am, that ain't good enough; you don't bam old Pew. You never was in that parlour in your life.

MRS. DRAKE. I never was? Well, I declare!

PEW. Well, then, if you was, where's the chest? Beside the chimbley, hey? (*Winking.*) Beside the table with the 'oly Bible?

MRS. DRAKE. No, sailor, you don't get any information out of me.

PEW. What, ma'am? Not to old Pew? Why, my god-child showed it me herself, and I told her where she'd find my name—P, E, W, Pew—cut out on the starn of it; and

sure enough she did. Why, ma'am, it was his old money-box when he was in the Guinea trade; and they do say he keeps the rhino in it still.

MRS. DRAKE. No, sailor, nothing out of me! And if you want to know, you can ask the Admiral himself! (*She crosses, L.*)

PEW. Hey? Old girl fly? Then I reckon I must have a mate, if it was the parish bull.

SCENE II

To these, KIT, *a little drunk*

KIT (*looking in over half-door*). Mrs. Drake! Mother! Where are you? Come and welcome the prodigal!

MRS. DRAKE (*coming forward to meet him as he enters;* PEW *remains concealed by the settle, smoking, drinking, and listening*). Lord bless us and save us, if it ain't my boy! Give us a kiss.

KIT. That I will, and twenty if you like, old girl. (*Kisses her.*)

MRS. DRAKE. O Kit, Kit, you've been at those other houses, where the stuff they give you, my dear, it is poison for a dog.

KIT. Round with friends, mother: only round with friends.

MRS. DRAKE. Well, anyway, you'll take a glass just to settle it, from me. (*She brings the bottle, and fills for him.*) There, that's pure; that'll do you no harm. But O, Kit, Kit, I thought you were done with all this Jack-a-shoring.

KIT. What cheer, mother? I'm only a sheet in the wind; and who's the worse for it but me?

MRS. DRAKE. Ah, and that dear young lady; and her waiting and keeping single these two years for the love of you!

KIT. She, mother? she's heart of oak, she's true as steel, and good as gold; and she has my ring on her finger, too. But where's the use? The Admiral won't look at me.

Mrs. Drake. Why not? You're as good a man as him any day.

Kit. Am I? He says I'm a devil, and swears that none of his flesh and blood—that's what he said, mother!—should lie at my mercy. That's what cuts me. If it wasn't for the good stuff I've been taking aboard, and the jolly companions I've been seeing it out with, I'd just go and make a hole in the water, and be done with it, I would, by George!

Mrs. Drake. That's like you men. Ah, we know you, we that keeps a public-house—we know you, good and bad: you go off on a frolic and forget; and you never think of the women that sit crying at home.

Kit. Crying? Arethusa cry? Why, dame, she's the bravest-hearted girl in all broad England! Here, fill the glass! I'll win her yet. I'll drink to her; here's to her bright eyes, and here's to the blessed feet she walks upon!

Pew (*looking round the corner of the settle*). Spoke like a gallant seaman, every inch. Shipmate, I'm a man as has suffered, and I'd like to shake your fist, and drink a can of flip with you.

Kit (*coming down*). Hullo, my hearty! who the devil are you? Who's this, mother?

Mrs. Drake. Nay, I know nothing about him. (*She goes out, R.*)

Pew. Cap'n, I'm a brother seaman, and my name is Pew, Old David Pew, as you may have heard of in your time, he having sailed along of 'Awke and glorious Benbow, and a right 'and man to both.

Kit. Benbow? Steady, mate! D'ye mean to say you went to sea before you were born?

Pew. See now! The sign of this here inn was running in my 'ed, I reckon. Benbow, says you? no, not likely! Anson, I mean; Anson and Sir Edward 'Awke: that's the pair: I was their right 'and man.

Kit. Well, mate, you may be all that, and more; but you're a rum 'un to look at, anyhow.

Pew. Right you are, and so I am. But what is looks? It's the 'art that does it: the 'art is the seaman's star; and

here's old David Pew's a matter of fifty years at sea, but tough and sound as the British Constitootion.

KIT. You're right there, Pew. Shake hands upon it. And you're a man they're down upon, just like myself, I see. We're a pair of plain, good-hearted, jolly tars; and all these 'longshore fellows cock a lip at us, by George. What cheer, mate?

ARETHUSA (*without*). Mrs. Drake! Mrs. Drake!

PEW. What, a female? hey? a female? Board her, board her, mate! I'm dark. (*He retires again behind, to table, R., behind settle.*)

ARETHUSA (*without*). Mrs. Drake!

MRS. DRAKE (*re-entering and running to door.*) Here I am, my dear; come in.

SCENE III

To these, ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA. Ah, Kit, I've found you. I thought you would lodge with Mrs. Drake.

KIT. What? are you looking for your consort? Whistle, I'm your dog; I'll come to you. I've been toasting you fathom deep, my beauty; and with every glass I love you dearer.

ARETHUSA. Now, Kit, if you want to please my father, this is not the way. Perhaps he thinks too much of the guineas: well, gather them—if you think me worth the price. Go you to your sloop, clinker built, eighty tons burthen—you see I remember Skipper Kit! I don't deny I like a man of spirit; but if you care to please Captain Gaunt, keep out of taverns; and if you could carry yourself a bit more—more elderly.

KIT. Can I? Would I? Ah, just couldn't and just won't I, then!

MRS. DRAKE. I hope, madam, you don't refer to my house; a publican I may be, but tavern is a word that I don't hold with; and here there's no bad drink, and no loose

company; and as for my blessedest Kit, I declare I love him like my own.

ARETHUSA. Why, who could help it, Mrs. Drake?

KIT. Arethusa, you're an angel. Do I want to please Captain Gaunt? Why, that's as much as ask whether I love you. I don't deny that his words cut me; for they did. But as for wanting to please him, if he was deep as the blue Atlantic, I would beat it out. And elderly, too? Aha, you witch, you're wise! Elderly? You've set the course; you leave me alone to steer it. Matrimony's my port, and love is my cargo. That's a likely question, ain't it, Mrs. Drake? Do I want to please him! Elderly, says you? Why, see here: Fill up my glass, and I'll drink to Arethusa on my knees.

ARETHUSA. Why, you stupid boy, do you think that would please him?

KIT. On my knees I'll drink it! (*As he kneels and drains the glass,* GAUNT *enters, and he scrambles to his feet.*)

SCENE IV

To these, GAUNT

GAUNT. Arethusa, this is no place for you.

ARETHUSA. No, father.

GAUNT. I wish you had been spared this sight; but look at him, child, since you are here; look at God's image, so debased. And you, young man (*to* KIT), you have proved that I was right. Are you the husband for this innocent maid?

KIT. Captain Gaunt, I have a word to say to you. Terror is your last word; you're bitter hard upon poor sinners, bitter hard and black—you that were a sinner yourself. These are not the true colours: don't deceive yourself; you're out of your course.

GAUNT. Heaven forbid that I should be hard, Christopher. It is not I; it is God's law that is of iron. Think! if

the blow were to fall now, some cord to snap within you, some enemy to plunge a knife into your heart; this room, with its poor taper light, to vanish; this world to disappear like a drowning man into the great ocean; and you, your brain still whirling, to be snatched into the presence of the eternal Judge: Christopher French, what answer would you make? For these gifts wasted, for this rich mercy scorned, for these high-handed bravings of your better angel,—what have you to say?

KIT. Well, sir, I want my word with you, and by your leave I'll have it out.

ARETHUSA. Kit, for pity's sake!

KIT. Arethusa, I don't speak to you, my dear: you've got my ring, and I know what that means. The man I speak to is Captain Gaunt. I came to-day as happy a man as ever stepped, and with as fair a look-out. What did you care? what was your reply? None of your flesh and blood, you said, should lie at the mercy of a wretch like me! Am I not flesh and blood that you should trample on me like that? Is that charity, to stamp the hope out of a poor soul?

GAUNT. You speak wildly; or the devil of drink that is in you speaks instead.

KIT. You think me drunk? well, so I am, and whose fault is it but yours? It was I that drank; but you take your share of it, Captain Gaunt: you it was that filled the can.

GAUNT. Christopher French, I spoke but for your good, your good and hers. "Woe unto him"—these are the dreadful words—"by whom offences shall come: it were better——" Christopher, I can but pray for both of us.

KIT. Prayers? Now I tell you freely, Captain Gaunt, I don't value your prayers. Deeds are what I ask; kind deeds and words—that's the true-blue piety: to hope the best and do the best, and speak the kindest. As for you, you insult me to my face; and then you'll pray for me? What's that? Insult behind my back is what I call it! No, sir; you're out of the course! you're no good man to my view, be you who you may.

Mrs. Drake. O Christopher! To Captain Gaunt?

Arethusa. Father, father, come away!

Kit. Ah, you see? She suffers too; we all suffer. You spoke just now of a devil; well, I'll tell you the devil you have: the devil of judging others. And as for me, I'll get as drunk as Bacchus.

Gaunt. Come!

SCENE V

Pew, Mrs. Drake, Kit

Pew (*coming out and waving his pipe*). Commander, shake! Hooray for old England! If there's anything in the world that goes to old Pew's 'art, it's argyment. Commander, you handled him like a babby, kept the weather gauge, and hulled him every shot. Commander, give it a name, and let that name be rum!

Kit. Ay, rum's the sailor's fancy. Mrs. Drake, a bottle and clean glasses.

Mrs. Drake. Kit French, I wouldn't. Think better of it, there's a dear! And that sweet girl just gone!

Pew. Ma'am, I'm not a 'ard man; I'm not the man to up and force a act of parleyment upon a helpless female. But you see here: Pew's friends is sacred. Here's my friend here, a perfeck seaman, and a man with a 'ed upon his shoulders, and a man that, damme, I admire. He give you a order, ma'am:—march!

Mrs. Drake. Kit, don't you listen to that blind man; he's the devil wrote upon his face.

Pew. Don't you insinuate against my friend. *He* ain't a child, I hope? *he* knows his business? Don't you get trying to go alowering of my friend in his own esteem.

Mrs. Drake. Well, I'll bring it, Kit; but it's against the grain. (*Exit.*)

Kit. I say, old boy, come to think of it, why should we? It's been glasses round with me all day. I've got my cargo.

PEW. You? and you just argy'd the 'ed off of Admiral Guinea? O stash that! *I* stand treat if it comes to that!

KIT. What! Do I meet with a blind seaman and not stand him? That's not the man I am!

MRS. DRAKE (*re-entering with bottle and glasses*). There!

PEW. Easy does it, ma'am.

KIT. Mrs. Drake, you had better trot.

MRS. DRAKE. Yes, I'll trot; and I trot with a sick heart, Kit French, to leave you drinking your wits away with that low blind man. For a low man you are—a low blind man—and your clothes they would disgrace a scarecrow. I'll go to my bed, Kit; and O, dear boy, go soon to yours—the old room, you know; it's ready for you—and go soon and sleep it off; for you know, dear, they, one and all, regret it in the morning; thirty years I've kept this house, and one and all they regret it, dear.

PEW. Come now, you walk!

MRS. DRAKE. O, it's not for your bidding. You a seaman? The ship for you to sail in is the hangman's cart.—Good-night, Kit dear, and better company!

SCENE VI

PEW, KIT. *They sit at the other table, L*

PEW. Commander, here's *her* 'ealth!

KIT. Ay, that's the line; *her* health! But that old woman there is a good old woman, Pew.

PEW. So she is, Commander. But there's no woman understands a seaman; now you and me, being both bred to it, we splice by natur'. As for A. G., if argyment can win her, why, she's yours. If I'd a-had your 'ed for argument, damme, I'd a-been a Admiral, I would! And if argyment won't win her, well, see here, you put your trust in David Pew.

KIT. David Pew, I don't know who you are, David Pew;

I never heard of you; I don't seem able to clearly see you. Mrs. Drake, she's a smart old woman, Pew, and she says you've the devil in your face.

PEW. Ah, and why, says you? Because I up and put her in her place, when she forgot herself to you, Commander.

KIT. Well, Pew, that's so; you stood by me like a man. Shake hands, Pew; and we'll make a night of it, or we'll know why, old boy!

PEW. That's my way. That's Pew's way, that is. That's Pew's way all over. Commander, excuse the liberty; but when I was your age, making allowance for a lowlier station and less 'ed for argyment, I was as like you as two peas. I know it by the v'ice (*sings*):

"We hadn't been three days at sea before we saw a sail,
So we clapped on every stitch would stand, although it blew a gale,
And we walked along full fourteen knots, for the barkie she did know,
As well as ever a soul on board, 'twas time for us go."

Chorus, Cap'n!

PEW *and* KIT (*in chorus*):

"Time for us to go,
Time for us to go,
As well as ever a soul on board,
'Twas time for us to go."

PEW (*sings*):

"We carried away the royal yard, and the stunsail boom was gone;
Says the skipper, 'They may go or stand, I'm damned if I don't crack on;
So the weather braces we'll round in, and the trysail set also,
And we'll keep the brig three p'ints away, for it's time for us to go.'"

Give it mouth, Commander!

PEW *and* KIT (*in chorus*):

"Time for us to go!
Time for us to go!
And we'll keep the brig three p'ints away,
For it's time for us to go."

PEW. I ain't sung like that since I sang to Admiral 'Awke, the night before I lost my eyes, I ain't. "Sink me!" says he, says Admiral 'Awke, my old commander (*touching his hat*), "sink me," he says, "if that ain't 'art-of-oak," he says; "'art-of-oak," says he, "and a pipe like a bloody blackbird!" Commander, here's my respecks, and the devil fly away with Admiral Guinea!

KIT. I say, Pew, how's this? How do you know about Admiral Guinea? I say, Pew, I begin to think you know too much.

PEW. I ax your pardon; but as a man with a 'ed for argyment—and that's your best p'int o' sailing, commander; intelleck is your best p'int—as a man with a 'ed for argyment, how do I make it out?

KIT. Aha, you're a sly dog, you're a deep dog, Pew; but you can't get the weather of Kit French. How do I make it out? I'll tell you. I make it out like this: Your name's Pew, ain't it? Very well. And you know Admiral Guinea, and that's his name, eh? Very well. Then you're Pew; and the Admiral's the Admiral; and you know the Admiral; and by George, that's all. Hey? Drink about, boys, drink about!

PEW. Lord love you, if I'd a-had a 'ed like yours! Why, the Admiral was my first cap'n. I was that man's bo'sun, I was, aboard the *Arethusa;* and we was like two brothers. Did you never hear of Guinea-land and the black ivory business? (*sings*):

"A quick run to the south we had, and when we made the Bight
We kept the offing all day long and crossed the bar at night.
Six hundred niggers in the hold and seventy we did stow,
And when we'd clapped the hatches on, 'twas time for us to go."

Lay forward, lads!

PEW *and* KIT (*in chorus*):

"Time for us to go," etc.

KIT. I say, Pew, I like you; you're a damned ugly dog; but I like you. But look ye here, Pew: fair does it, you

know, or we part company this minute. If you and the Ad——the Admirable were like brothers on the Guinea coast, why aren't you like brothers here?

Pew. Ah, *I* see you coming. What a 'ed! what a 'ed! Since Pew is a friend of the family, says you, why didn't he sail in and bear a hand, says you, when you was knocking the Admiral's ship about his ears in argyment?

Kit. Well, Pew, now you put a name to it, why not?

Pew. Ah, why not? There I recko'nise you. Well, see here: argyment's my weakness, in a manner of speaking; I wouldn't a-borne down and spiled sport, not for gold untold, no, not for rum, I wouldn't! And besides, Commander, I put it to you, as between man and man, would it have been seaman-like to let on and show myself to a old shipmate, when he was yard-arm to yard-arm with a craft not half his metal, and getting blown out of water every broadside? Would it have been 'ansome? I put it to you, as between man and man.

Kit. Pew, I may have gifts; but I never thought of that. Why, no: not seaman-like. Pew, you've a heart; that's what I like you for.

Pew. Ah, that I have: you'll see. I wanted—now you follow me—I wanted to keep square with Admiral Guinea. Why? says you. Well, put it that I know a fine young fellow when I sees him; and put it that I wish him well; and put it, for the sake of argyment, that the father of that lovely female's in my power. Aha? Pew's power! Why, in my 'ands he's like this pocket 'andke'cher. Now, brave boy, do you see?

Kit. No, Pew, my head's gone; I don't see.

Pew. Why, cheer up, Commander! You want to marry this lovely female?

Kit. Ay, that I do; but I'm not fit for her, Pew; I'm a drunken dog, and I'm not fit for her.

Pew. Now, Cap'n, you'll allow an old seaman to be judge: one as sailed with 'Awke and blessed Benb——with 'Awke and noble Anson. You've been open and above-board with me, and I'll do the same by you: it being the case that you're

hard hit about a lovely woman, which many a time and oft it has happened to old Pew; and him with a feeling 'art that bleeds for you, Commander; why, look here; I'm that girl's godfather; promised and vowed for her, I did; and I like you; and you're the man for her; and, by the living Jacob, you shall splice!

KIT. David Pew, do you mean what you say?

PEW. Do I mean what I say? Does David Pew? Ask Admiral 'Awke! Ask old Admiral Byng in his coffin, where I laid him with these 'ands! Pew does, is what those naval commanders would reply. Mean it? I reckon so.

KIT. Then shake hands. You're an honest man, Pew—old Pew!—and I'll make your fortune. But there's something else, if I could keep the run of it. O, ah! But *can* you? That's the point. Can you; don't you see?

PEW. Can I? You leave that to me; I'll bring you to your moorings; I'm the man that can, and I'm him that will. But only, look here, let's understand each other. You're a bold blade, ain't you? You won't stick at a trifle for a lovely female? You'll back me up? You're a man, ain't you? a man, and you'll see me through and through it, eh? Come; is that so? Are you fair and square and stick at nothing?

KIT. Me, Pew? I'll go through fire and water.

PEW. I'll risk it.—Well, then, see here, my son: another swallow and we jog.

KIT. No, not to-night, Pew, not to-night!

PEW. Commander, in a manner of speaking, wherefore?

KIT. Wherefore, Pew? 'Cause why, Pew? 'Cause I'm drunk, and be damned to you!

PEW. Commander, I ax your pardon; but, saving your presence, that's a lie. What! drunk? a man with a 'ed for argyment like that? Just you get up, and steady yourself on your two pins, and you'll be as right as ninepence.

KIT. Pew, before we budge, let me shake your flipper again. You're heart of oak, Pew, sure enough; and if you can bring the Adam—Admirable about, why, damme, I'll make your fortune! How you're going to do it, I don't

know; but I'll stand by; and I know you'll do it if anybody can. But I'm drunk, Pew; you can't deny that: I'm as drunk as a Gosport fiddler, Pew; and how you're going to do it is a mystery to me.

PEW. Ah, you leave that to me. All I want is what I've got: your promise to stand by and bear a hand (*producing a dark lantern*). Now, here, you see is my little glim; it ain't for me, because I'm blind, worse luck! and the day and night is the blessed same to David Pew. But you watch. You put the candle near me. Here's what there ain't mony blind men could do, take the pick o' them! (*lighting a screw of paper, and with that, the lantern*) Hey? That's it. Hey? Go and pity the poor blind!

KIT (*while* PEW *blows out the candles*). But I say, Pew, what do you want with it?

PEW. To see by, my son. (*He shuts the lantern and puts it in his pocket. Stage quite dark. Moonlight at window.*) All ship-shape? No sparks about? No? Come, then, lean on me and heave ahead for the lovely female. (*Singing sotto voce*):

"Time for us to go,
Time for us to go,
And when we'd clapped the hatches on,
'Twas time for us to go."

DROP.

ACT III

The Stage represents the ADMIRAL'S *house, as in Act I.* GAUNT *is reading aloud;* ARETHUSA *sits at his feet. Candles.*

SCENE I

ARETHUSA, GAUNT

GAUNT (*reading*). "And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." (*He closes the book.*) Amen.

ARETHUSA. Amen. Father, there spoke my heart.

GAUNT. Arethusa, the Lord in his mercy has seen right to vex us with trials of many kinds. It is a little matter to endure the pangs of the flesh: the smart of wounds, the passion of hunger and thirst, the heaviness of disease; and in this world I have learned to take thought for nothing save the quiet of your soul. It is through our affections that we are smitten with the true pain, even the pain that kills.

ARETHUSA. And yet this pain is our natural lot. Father, I fear to boast, but I know that I can bear it. Let my life, then, flow like common lives, each pain rewarded with some pleasure, each pleasure linked with some pain: nothing pure whether for good or evil: and my husband, like myself, and all the rest of us, only a poor kind-hearted sinner, striving for the better part. What more could any woman ask?

GAUNT. Child, child, your words are like a sword. What would she ask? Look upon me, whom, in the earthly sense,

you are commanded to respect. Look upon me: do I bear a mark? is there any outward sign to bid a woman avoid and flee from me?

ARETHUSA. I see nothing but the face I love.

GAUNT. There is none: nor yet on the young man Christopher, whose words still haunt and upbraid me. Yes, I am hard; I was born hard, born a tyrant, born to be what I was, a slaver captain. But to-night, and to save you, I will pluck my heart out of my bosom. You shall know what makes me what I am; you shall hear, out of my own life, why I dread and deprecate this marriage. Child, do you remember your mother?

ARETHUSA. Remember her? Ah, if she had been here to-day!

GAUNT. It is thirteen years since she departed, and took with her the whole sunshine of my life. Do you remember the manner of her departure? You were a child, and cannot; but I can and do. Remember? shall I ever forget? Here or hereafter, ever forget! Ten years she was my wife, and ten years she lay a-dying. Arethusa, she was a saint on earth; and it was I that killed her.

ARETHUSA. Killed her? my mother? You?

GAUNT. Not with my hand; for I loved her. I would not have hurt one hair upon her head. But she got her death by me, as sure as by a blow.

ARETHUSA. I understand—I can see: you brood on trifles, misunderstandings, unkindnesses you think them; though my mother never knew of them, or never gave them a second thought. It is natural, when death has come between us.

GAUNT. I married her from Falmouth. She was comely as the roe; I see her still—her dove's eyes and her smile! I was older than she; and I had a name for hardness, a hard and wicked man; but she loved me—my Hester!—and she took me as I was. O how I repaid her trusts! Well, our child was born to us; and we named her after the brig I had built and sailed, the old craft whose likeness—older than you, girl—stands there above our heads. And so far, that was happiness. But she yearned for my salvation; and it

was there I thwarted her. My sins were a burden upon her spirit, a shame to her in this world, her terror in the world to come. She talked much and often of my leaving the devil's trade I sailed in. She had a tender and a Christian heart, and she would weep and pray for the poor heathen creatures that I bought and sold and shipped into misery, till my conscience grew hot within me. I've put on my hat, and gone out and made oath that my next cargo should be my last; but it never was, that oath was never kept. So I sailed again and again for the Guinea coast, until the trip came that was to be my last indeed. Well, it fell out that we had good luck trading, and I stowed the brig with these poor heathen as full as she could hold. We had a fair run westward till we were past the line; but one night the wind rose and there came a hurricane, and for seven days we were tossed on the deep seas, in the hardest straits, and every hand on deck. For several days they were battened down: all that time we heard their cries and lamentations, but worst at the beginning; and when at last, and near dead myself, I crept below—O! some they were starved, some smothered, some dead of broken limbs; and the hold was like a lazar-house in the time of the anger of the Lord!

ARETHUSA. O!

GAUNT. It was two hundred and five that we threw overboard: two hundred and five lost souls that I had hurried to their doom. I had many die with me before; but not like that—not such a massacre as that; and I stood dumb before the sight. For I saw I was their murderer—body and soul their murderer; and, Arethusa, my Hester knew it. That was her death-stroke: it felled her. She had long been dying slowly; but from the hour she heard that story, the garment of the flesh began to waste and perish, the fountains of her life dried up; she faded before my face; and in two months from my landing—O Hester, Hester, would God I had died for thee!

ARETHUSA. Mother! O poor soul! O poor father! O father, it was hard on you.

GAUNT. The night she died she lay there, in her bed.

She took my hand. "I am going," she said, "to heaven. For Christ's sake," she said, "come after me, and bring my little maid. I'll be waiting and wearying till you come"; and she kissed my hand, the hand that killed her. At that I broke out calling on her to stop, for it was more than I could bear. But no, she said she must still tell me of my sins, and how the thought of them had bowed down her life. "And O!" she said, "if I couldn't prevail on you alive, let my death." . . . Well, then, she died. What have I done since then? I've laid my course for Hester. Sin, temptation, pleasure, all this poor shadow of a world, I saw them not: I saw my Hester waiting, waiting and wearying. I have made my election sure; my sins I have cast them out. Hester, Hester, I will come to you, poor waiting one; and I'll bring your little maid: ay, dearest soul, I'll bring your little maid safe with me!

ARETHUSA. O teach me how! Show me the way! only show me.—O mother, mother!—If it were paved with fire, show me the way, and I will walk it barefoot!

GAUNT. They call me a miser. They say that in this sea-chest of mine I hoard my gold. (*He passes R. to chest, takes out key, and unlocks it.*) They think my treasure and my very soul are locked up here. They speak after the flesh, but they are right. See!

ARETHUSA. Her watch? the wedding ring? O father, forgive me!

GAUNT. Ay, her watch that counted the hours when I was away; they were few and sorrowful, my Hester's hours; and this poor contrivance numbered them. The ring—with that I married her. This chain, it's of Guinea gold; I brought it home for her the year before we married, and she wore it to her wedding. It was a vanity: they are all vanities; but they are the treasure of my soul. Below here, see, her wedding dress. Ay, the watch has stopped: dead, dead. And I know that my Hester died of me; and day and night, asleep and awake, my soul abides in her remembrance.

ARETHUSA. And you come in your sleep to look at them. O poor father! I understand—I understand you now.

GAUNT. In my sleep? Ay? do I so? My Hester!

ARETHUSA. And why, why did you not tell me? I thought —I was like the rest!—I feared you were a miser. O, you should have told me; I should have been so proud—so proud and happy. I knew you loved her; but not this, not this.

GAUNT. Why should I have spoken? It was all between my Hester and me.

ARETHUSA. Father, may I speak? May I tell you what my heart tells me? You do not understand about my mother. You loved her—O, as few men can love. And she loved you: think how she loved you! In this world, you know—you have told me—there is nothing perfect. All we men and women have our sins; and they are a pain to those that love us, and the deeper the love, the crueller the pain. That is life; and it is life we ask, not heaven; and what matter for the pain, if only the love holds on? Her love held: then she was happy! Her love was immortal; and when she died, her one grief was to be parted from you, her one hope to welcome you again.

GAUNT. And you, Arethusa: I was to bring her little maid.

ARETHUSA. God bless her, yes, and me! But, father, can you not see that she was blessed among women?

GAUNT. Child, child, you speak in ignorance; you touch upon griefs you cannot fathom.

ARETHUSA. No, dearest, no. She loved you, loved you and died of it. Why else do women live? What would I ask but just to love my Kit and die for him, and look down from heaven, and see him keep my memory holy and live the nobler for my sake?

GAUNT. Ay, do you so love him?

ARETHUSA. Even as my mother loved my father.

GAUNT. Ay? Then we will see. What right have I—— You are your mother's child: better, tenderer, wiser than I. Let us seek guidance in prayer. Good-night, my little maid.

ARETHUSA. O father, I know you at last.

SCENE II

GAUNT *and* ARETHUSA *go out, L., carrying the candles. Stage dark. A distant clock chimes the quarters, and strikes one. Then, the tap-tapping of* PEW's *stick is heard without; the key is put into the lock; and enter* PEW, *C., he pockets key, and is followed by* KIT, *with dark lantern.*

PEW. Quiet, you lubber! Can't you foot it soft, you that has daylights and a glim?

KIT. All right, old boy. How the devil did we get through the door? Shall I knock him up?

PEW. Stow your gab (*seizing his wrist*). Under your breath!

KIT. Avast that! You're a savage dog, aren't you?

PEW. Turn on that glim.

KIT. It's as right as a trivet, Pew. What next? By George, Pew, I'll make your fortune.

PEW. Here, now, look round this room, and sharp. D'ye see a old sea-chest?

KIT. See it, Pew? why, d'ye think I'm blind?

PEW. Take me across, and let me feel of her. Mum; catch my hand. Ah, that's her (*feeling the chest*), that's the Golden Mary. Now, see here, my bo, if you've the pluck of a weevil in a biscuit, this girl is yours; if you hain't, and think to sheer off, I'm blind, but I'm deadly.

KIT. You'll keep a civil tongue in your head all the same. I'll take threats from nobody, blind or not. Let's knock up the Admiral and be done with it. What I want is to get rid of this lark lantern. It makes me feel like a housebreaker, by George.

PEW (*seated on chest*). You follow this. I'm sick of drinking bilge, when I might be rolling in my coach, and I'm dog-sick of Jack Gaunt. Who's he to be wallowing in gold, when a better man is groping crusts in the gutter and spunging for rum? Now, here in this blasted chest is the gold to make men of us for life: gold, ay, gobs of it; and

writin's too—things that if I had the proof of 'em I'd hold Jack Gaunt to the grindstone till his face was flat. I'd have done it single-handed; but I'm blind, worse luck: I'm all in the damned dark here, poking with a stick—Lord, burn up with lime the eyes that saw it! That's why I raked up you. Come, out with your iron, and prize the lid off. You shall touch your snack, and have the wench for nothing; ay, and fling her in the street, when done.

KIT. So you brought me here to steal, did you?

PEW. Ay did I; and you shall. I'm a biter: I bring blood.

KIT. Now, Pew, you came here on my promise, or I'd kill you like a rat. As it is, out of that door! One, two, three (*drawing his cutlass*), and off!

PEW (*leaping at his throat, and with a great voice*). Help! murder! thieves!

SCENE III

To these ARETHUSA, GAUNT, *with lights. Stage light.* PEW *has* KIT *down, and is throttling him.*

PEW. I've got him, Cap'n. What, kill my old commander, and rob him of his blessed child? Not with old Pew!

GAUNT. Get up, David: can't you see you're killing him? Unhand, I say.

ARETHUSA. In heaven's name, who is it?

PEW. It's a damned villain, my pretty; and his name, to the best of my belief, is French.

ARETHUSA. Kit? Kit French? Never!

KIT (*rising*). He's done for me. (*Falls on chest.*)

[PEW. Don't you take on about him, ducky; he ain't worth it. Cap'n Gaunt, I took him and I give him up. You was 'ard on me this morning, Cap'n: this is my way—Pew's way, this is—of paying of you out.

ARETHUSA. Father, this is the blind man that came while

you were abroad. Sure you'll not listen to *him*. And you, Kit, you, what is this?

KIT. Captain Gaunt, that blind devil has half-throttled me. He brought me here—I can't speak—he has almost killed me—and I'd been drinking too.

GAUNT. And you, David Pew, what do you say?]

PEW. Cap'n, the rights of it is this. Me and that young man there was partaking in a friendly drop of rum at the *Admiral Benbow* inn; and I'd just proposed his blessed Majesty, when the young man he ups and says to me: "Pew," he says, "I like you, Pew: you're a true seaman," he says; "and I'm one as sticks at nothing; and damme, Pew," he says, "I'll make your fortune." [Can he deny as them was his words? Look at him, you as has eyes: no, he can not. "Come along of me," he says, "and damme, I'll make your fortune."] Well, Cap'n, he lights a dark lantern (which you'll find it somewhere on the floor, I reckon), and out we goes, me follerin' his lead, as I thought was 'art-of-oak and a true-blue mariner; and the next I knows is, here we was in here, and him a-askin' me to 'old the glim, while he prized the lid off of your old sea-chest with his cutlass.

GAUNT. The chest? (*He leaps, R., and examines chest*). Ah!

PEW. Leastways, I was to 'elp him, by his account of it, while he nailed the rhino, and then took and carried off that lovely maid of yours; for a lovely maid she is, and one as touched old Pew's 'art. Cap'n, when I 'eard that, my blood biled. "Young man," I says, "you don't know David Pew," I says; and with that I ups and does my dooty by him, cutlass and all, like a lion-'arted seaman, though blind. [And then in comes you, and I gives him up: as you know for a fack is true, and I'll subscribe at the Assizes. And that, if you was to cut me into junks, is the truth, the 'ole truth, and nothing but the truth, world without end, so help me, amen; and if you'll 'and me over the 'Oly Bible, me not having such a thing about me at the moment, why, I'll put a oath upon it like a man.]

ARETHUSA. Father, have you heard?

[GAUNT. I know this man, Arethusa, and the truth is not in him.

ARETHUSA. Well, and why do we wait? We know Kit, do we not?

KIT. Ay, Captain, you know the pair of us, and you can see his face and mine.]

GAUNT. Christopher, the facts are all against you. I find you here in my house at midnight: you who at least had eyes to see, and must have known whither you were going. It was this man, not you, who called me up: and when I came in, it was he who was uppermost and who gave you up to justice. This unsheathed cutlass is yours; there hangs the scabbard, empty; and as for the dark lantern, of what use is light to the blind? and who could have trimmed and lighted it but you?

PEW. Ah, Cap'n, what a 'ed for argyment!

KIT. And now, sir, that you have spoken, I claim the liberty to speak on my side.

GAUNT. Not so. I will first have done with this man. David Pew, it were too simple to believe your story as you tell it; but I can find no testimony against you. From whatever reason, assuredly you have done me service. Here are five guineas to set you on your way. Begone at once; and while it is yet time, think upon your repentance.

PEW. Cap'n, here's my respecks. You've turned a pious man, Cap'n; it does my 'art good to 'ear you. But you ain't the only one. O no! I came about and paid off on the other tack before you, I reckon: you ask the Chaplain of the Fleet else, as called me on the quarter-deck before old Admiral 'Awke himself (*touching his hat*), my old commander. ["David Pew," he says, "five-and-thirty year have I been in this trade, man and boy," that chaplain says, "and damme, Pew," says he, "if ever I seen the seaman that could rattle off his catechism within fifty mile of you. Here's five guineas out of my own pocket," he says; "and what's more to the p'int," he says, "I'll speak to my reverend brother-in-law, the Bishop of Dover," he says; "and if ever you leave the sea, and wants a place as beadle, why damme," says he,

" you go to him, for you're the man for him, and him for you."]

GAUNT. David Pew, you never set your foot on a King's ship in all your life. There lies the road.

PEW. Ah, you was always a 'ard man, Cap'n, and a 'ard man to believe, like Didymus the 'Ebrew prophet. But it's time for me to go, and I'll be going. My service to you, Cap'n: and I kiss my 'and to that lovely female. (*Singing*):

"Time for us to go,
Time for us to go,
And when we'd clapped the hatches on,
'Twas time for us to go."

SCENE IV

KIT, ARETHUSA, GAUNT

ARETHUSA. Now, Kit?

KIT. Well, sir, and now?

GAUNT. I find you here in my house at this untimely and unseemly hour; I find you there in company with one who, to my assured knowledge, should long since have swung in the wind at Execution Dock. What brought you? Why did you open my door while I slept to such a companion? Christopher French, I have two treasures. One (*laying his hand on* ARETHUSA's *shoulder*) I know you covet: Christopher, is this your love?

KIT. Sir, I have been fooled and trapped. That man declared he knew you, declared he could make you change your mind about our marriage. I was drunk, sir, and I believed him: heaven knows I am sober now, and can see my folly; but I believed him then, and followed him. He brought me here; he told me your chest was full of gold that would make men of us for life. At that I saw my fault, sir, and drew my cutlass; and he, in the wink of an eye, roared out for help, leaped at my throat like a weasel and had me

rolling on the floor. He was quick, and I, as I tell you, sir, was off my balance.

GAUNT. Is this man, Pew, your enemy?

KIT. No, sir; I never saw him till to-night.

GAUNT. Then, if you must stand the justice of your country, come to the proof with a better plea. What? lantern and cutlass yours; you the one that knew the house; you the one that saw; you the one overtaken and denounced; and you spin me a galley yarn like that? If that is all your defence, you'll hang, sir, hang.

ARETHUSA. Ah! . . . Father, I give him up: I will never see him, never speak of him, never think of him again; I take him from my heart; I give myself wholly up to you and to my mother; I will obey you in every point—O, not at a word merely—at a finger raised! I will do all this; I will do anything—anything you bid me; I swear it in the face of heaven. Only—Kit! I love him, father, I love him. Let him go.

[GAUNT. Go?

ARETHUSA. You let the other. Open the door again—for my sake, father—in my mother's name—O, open the door and let him go.]

KIT. Let me go? My girl, if you had cast me out this morning, good and well: I would have left you, though it broke my heart. But it's a changed story now: now I'm down on my luck, and you come and stab me from behind. I ask no favour, and I'll take none; I stand here on my innocence, and, God helping me, I'll clear my good name, and get your love again, if it's love worth having. [Now, Captain Gaunt, I've said my say, and you may do your pleasure. I am my father's son, and I never feared to face the truth.

GAUNT. You have spoken like a man, French, and you may go. I leave you free.

KIT. Nay, sir, not so: not with my will. I'm accused and counted guilty; the proofs are against me; the girl I love has turned upon me. I'll accept no mercy at your hands.] Captain Gaunt, I am your prisoner.

ARETHUSA. Kit, dear Kit——

GAUNT. Silence! Young man, I have offered you liberty without bond or condition. You refuse. You shall be judged. Meanwhile (*opening the door, R.*), you will go in here. I keep your cutlass. The night brings counsel: to-morrow shall decide. (*He locks* KIT *in, leaving the key in the door.*)

SCENE V

GAUNT, ARETHUSA, *afterwards* PEW

ARETHUSA. Father, you believe in him; you do; I know you do.

GAUNT. Child, I am not given to be hasty. I will pray and sleep upon this matter. (*A knocking at the door, C.*) Who knocks so late? (*He opens.*)

PEW (*entering*). Cap'n, shall I fetch the constable?

GAUNT. No.

PEW. No? Have ye killed him?

GAUNT. My man, I'll see you into the road. (*He takes* PEW *by the arm, and goes out with him.*)

SCENE VI

ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA. (*Listens; then running to door, R.*) Kit—dearest Kit! wait! I will come to you soon. (GAUNT *re-enters, C., as the drop falls.*)

ACT IV

The Stage represents the ADMIRAL'S *house, as in Acts I. and III. A chair, L., in front. As the curtain rises, the Stage is dark. Enter* ARETHUSA, *L., with candle; she lights another; and passes to door, R., which she unbolts. Stage light.*

SCENE I

ARETHUSA, KIT

ARETHUSA. Come, dear Kit, come!

KIT. Well, I'm here.

ARETHUSA. O Kit, you are not angry with me?

KIT. Have I reason to be pleased?

ARETHUSA. Kit, I was wrong. Forgive me.

KIT. O yes. I forgive you. I suppose you meant it kindly; but there are some kindnesses a man would rather die than take a gift of. When a man is accused, Arethusa, it is not that he fears the gallows—it's the shame that cuts him. At such a time as that, the way to help was to stand to your belief. You should have nailed my colours to the mast, not spoke of striking them. If I were to be hanged to-morrow, and your love there, and a free pardon and a dukedom on the other side—which would I choose?

ARETHUSA. Kit, you must judge me fairly. It was not my life that was at stake, it was yours. Had it been mine—mine, Kit—what had you done, then?

KIT. I am a downright fool; I saw it inside out. Why, give you up, by George!

ARETHUSA. Ah, you see! Now you understand. It was all pure love. When he said that word—O!—death and that disgrace! . . . But I know my father. He fears nothing so much as the goodness of his heart; and yet it conquers.

He would pray, he said; and to-night, and by the kindness of his voice, I knew he was convinced already. All that is wanted is that you should forgive me.

KIT. Arethusa, if you looked at me like that I'd forgive you piracy on the high seas. I was only sulky; I was boxed up there in the black dark, and couldn't see my hand. It made me pity that blind man, by George!

ARETHUSA. O, that blind man! The fiend! He came back, Kit: did you hear him? he thought we had killed you —you!

KIT. Well, well, it serves me right for keeping company with such a swab.

ARETHUSA. One thing puzzles me: how did you get in? I saw my father lock the door.

KIT. Ah, how? That's just it. I was a sheet in the wind, you see. How did we? He did it somehow. . . . By George, he had a key! He can get in again.

ARETHUSA. Again? that man!

KIT. Ay, can he! Again! When he likes!

ARETHUSA. Kit, I am afraid. O Kit, he will kill my father.

KIT. Afraid? I'm glad of that. Now, you'll see I'm worth my salt at something. Ten to one he's back to Mrs. Drake's. I'll after, and lay him aboard.

ARETHUSA. O Kit, he is too strong for you.

KIT. Arethusa, that's below the belt! Never you fear; I'll give a good account of him.

ARETHUSA (*taking cutlass from the wall*). You'll be none the worse for this, dear.

KIT. That's so (*making cuts*). All the same, I'm half ashamed to draw on a blind man; it's too much odds. (*He leans suddenly against the table.*) Ah!

ARETHUSA. Kit! Are you ill?

KIT. My head's like a humming top; it serves me right for drinking.

ARETHUSA. O, and the blind man! (*She runs, L., to the corner cupboard, brings a bottle and glass, and fills and offers glass.*) Here, lad, drink that.

KIT. To you! That's better. (*Bottle and glass remain on* GAUNT'S *table.*)

ARETHUSA. Suppose you miss him?

KIT. Miss him! The road is straight; and I can hear the tap-tapping of that stick a mile away.

ARETHUSA (*listening*). St! my father is stirring in his room!

KIT. Let me get clear; tell him why when I'm gone. The door——?

ARETHUSA. Locked!

KIT. The window!

ARETHUSA. Quick, quick! (*She unfastens R. window, by which* KIT *goes out.*)

SCENE II

ARETHUSA, GAUNT *entering L.*

ARETHUSA. Father, Kit is gone. . . . He is asleep.

GAUNT. Waiting, waiting and wearying. The years they go so heavily, my Hester still waiting! (*He goes R. to chest, which he opens.*) That is your chain; it's of Guinea gold; I brought it you from Guinea. (*Taking out chain.*) You liked it once; it pleased you long ago; O, why not now—why will you not be happy now? . . . I swear this is my last voyage; see, I lay my hand upon the Holy Book and swear it. One more venture—for the child's sake, Hester; you don't think upon your little maid.

ARETHUSA. Ah, for my sake, it was for my sake!

GAUNT. Ten days out from Lagos. That's a strange sunset, Mr. Yeo. All hands shorten sail! Lay aloft there, look smart! . . . What's that? Only the negroes in the hold. . . . Mr. Yeo, she can't live long at this; I have a wife and child in Barnstaple. . . . Christ, what a sea! Hold on, for God's sake—hold on fore and aft! Great God! (*as though the sea were making a breach over the ship at the moment*).

ARETHUSA. O!

GAUNT. They seem quieter down below there. . . . No water—no light—no air—seven days battened down, and the seas mountain high, and the ship labouring hell-deep! Two hundred and five, two hundred and five, two hundred and five—all to eternal torture!

ARETHUSA. O pity him, pity him! Let him sleep, let him forget! Let her prayers avail in heaven, and let him rest!

GAUNT. Hester, no, don't smile at me. Rather tears! I have seen you weep—often, often; two hundred and five times. Two hundred and five! (*With ring.*) Hester, here is your ring (*he tries to put the ring on his finger*). How comes it in my hand? Not fallen off again? O no, impossible! it was made smaller, dear, it can't have fallen off! Ah, you waste away. You must live, you must, for the dear child's sake, for mine, Hester, for mine! Ah, the child. Yes. Who am I to judge? Poor Kit French! And she, your little maid, she's like you, Hester, and she will save him! How should a man be saved without a wife?

ARETHUSA. O father, if you could but hear me thank and bless you! (*The tapping of* PEW's *stick is heard approaching.* GAUNT *passes L. front and sits.*)

GAUNT (*beginning to count the taps*). One—two—two hundred and five——

ARETHUSA (*listening*). God help me, the blind man! (*She runs to door, C.; the key is put into the lock from without, and the door opens.*)

SCENE III

ARETHUSA (*at back of stage by the door*); GAUNT (*front L.*); *to these,* PEW, *C.*

PEW (*sotto voce*). All snug. (*Coming down.*) So that was you, my young friend Christopher, as shot by me on the road; and so you was hot foot after old Pew? Christopher, my young friend, I reckon I'll have the bowels out of that chest, and I reckon you'll be lagged and scragged

for it. (*At these words* ARETHUSA *locks the door, and takes the key.*) What's that? All still. There's something wrong about this room. Pew, my 'art-of-oak, you're queer to-night; brace up, and carry on. Where's the tool? (*Producing knife.*) Ah, here she is; and now for the chest; and the gold; and rum—rum—rum. What! Open? . . . old clothes, by God! . . . He's done me; he's been before me; he's bolted with the swag; that's why he ran: Lord wither and waste him forty year for it! O Christopher, if I had my fingers on your throat! Why didn't I strangle the soul out of him? I heard the breath squeak in his weasand; and Jack Gaunt pulled me off. Ah, Jack, that's another I owe you. My pious friend, if I was God Almighty for five minutes! (GAUNT *rises and begins to pace the stage like a quarterdeck, L.*) What's that? A man's walk. He don't see me, thank the blessed dark! But it's time to slip, my bo. (*He gropes his way stealthily till he comes to* GAUNT'S *table, where he burns his hand in the candle.*) A candle—lighted—then it's bright as day! Lord God, doesn't he see me? It's the horrors come alive. (GAUNT *draws near and turns away.*) I'll go mad, mad! (*He gropes to the door, stopping and starting.*) Door. (*His voice rising for the first time, sharp with terror.*) Locked? Key gone? Trapped! Keep off—keep off of me—keep away! (*Sotto voce again.*) Keep your head, Lord have mercy, keep your head. I'm wet with sweat. What devil's den is this? I must out—out! (*He shakes the door vehemently.*) No? Knife it is then—knife—knife—knife! (*He moves with the knife raised towards* GAUNT, *intently listening and changing his direction as* GAUNT *changes his position on the stage.*)

ARETHUSA (*rushing to intercept him*). Father, father, wake!

GAUNT. Hester, Hester! (*He turns, in time to see* ARETHUSA *grapple* PEW *in the centre of the Stage, and* PEW *force her down.*)

ARETHUSA. Kit! Kit!

PEW (*with the knife raised*). Pew's way!

SCENE IV

To these, KIT

(*He leaps through window, R., and cuts* PEW *down. At the same moment,* GAUNT, *who has been staring helplessly at his daughter's peril, fully awakes.*)

GAUNT. Death and blood! (KIT, *helping* ARETHUSA, *has let fall the cutlass.* GAUNT *picks it up and runs on* PEW.) Damned mutineer, I'll have your heart out! (*He stops, stands, staring, drops cutlass, falls upon his knees.*) God forgive me! Ah, foul sins, would you blaze forth again? Lord, close your ears! Hester, Hester, hear me not! Shall all these years and tears be unavailing?

ARETHUSA. Father, I am not hurt.

GAUNT. Ay, daughter, but my soul—my lost soul!

PEW (*rising on his elbow*). Rum? You've done me. For God's sake, rum. (ARETHUSA *pours out a glass, which* KIT *gives to him.*) Rum? This ain't rum; it's fire! (*With great excitement.*) What's this? I don't like rum? (*Feebly.*) Ay, then, I'm a dead man, and give me water.

GAUNT. Now even his sins desert him.

PEW (*drinking water*). Jack Gaunt, you've always been my rock ahead. It's thanks to you I've got my papers, and this time I'm shipped for Fiddler's Green. Admiral, we ain't like to meet again, and I'll give you a toast: Here's Fiddler's Green, and damn all lubbers! (*Seizing* GAUNT's *arm.*) I say—fair dealings, Jack!—none of that heaven business: Fiddler's Green's my port, now, ain't it?

GAUNT. David, you've hove short up, and God forbid that I deceive you. Pray, man, pray; for in the place to which you are bound there is no mercy and no hope.

PEW. Ay, my lass, you're black, but your blood's red, and I'm all a-muck with it. Pass the rum, and be damned to you. (*Trying to sing*):

"Time for us to go,
Time for us——"

(*He dies.*)

GAUNT. But for the grace of God, there lies John Gaunt! Christopher, you have saved my child; and I, I, that was blinded with self-righteousness, have fallen. Take her, Christopher; but O, walk humbly!

CURTAIN.

MACAIRE

A MELODRAMATIC FARCE IN THREE ACTS

BY

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

AND

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

PERSONS REPRESENTED

Robert Macaire.
Bertrand.
Dumont, Landlord of the *Auberge des Adrets.*
Charles, a Gendarme, Dumont's supposed son.
Goriot.
The Marquis, Charles's Father.
The Brigadier of Gendarmerie.
The Curate.
The Notary.
A Waiter.
Ernestine, Goriot's Daughter.
Aline.
Maids, Peasants (*Male and Female*), Gendarmes.

The Scene is laid in the Courtyard of the *Auberge des Adrets,* on the frontier of France and Savoy. The time 1820. The action occupies an interval of from twelve to fourteen hours: from four in the afternoon till about five in the morning.

Note—The time between the acts should be as brief as possible, and the piece played, where it is merely comic, in a vein of patter.

MACAIRE

ACT I

The Stage represents the courtyard of the Auberge des Adrets. It is surrounded by the buildings of the inn, with a gallery on the first story, approached, C., by a straight flight of stairs. L. C., the entrance doorway. A little in front of this, a small grated office, containing a business table, brass-bound cabinet, and portable cash-box. In front, R. and L., tables and benches; one L., partially laid for a considerable party.

SCENE I

ALINE *and* MAIDS; *to whom* FIDDLERS; *afterwards* DUMONT *and* CHARLES. *As the curtain rises, the sound of the violins is heard approaching.* ALINE *and the inn servants, who are discovered laying the table, dance up to door L. C., to meet the* FIDDLERS, *who enter likewise dancing to their own music. Air: "Haste to the Wedding." The* FIDDLERS *exeunt playing into house, R. U. E.* ALINE *and* MAIDS *dance back to table, which they proceed to arrange.*

ALINE. Well, give me fiddles: fiddles and a wedding feast. It tickles your heart till your heels make a runaway match of it. I don't mind extra work, I don't, so long as there's fun about it. Hand me up that pile of plates. The quinces there, before the bride. Stick a pink in the Notary's glass: that's the girl he's courting.

DUMONT (*entering; with* CHARLES). Good girls, good girls! Charles, in ten minutes from now what happy faces will smile around that board!

CHARLES. Sir, my good fortune is complete; and most of all in this, that my happiness has made my father happy.

DUMONT. Your father? Ah, well, upon that point we shall have more to say.

CHARLES. What more remains that has not been said already? For surely, sir, there are few sons more fortunate in their father; and, since you approve of this marriage, may I not conceive you to be in that sense fortunate in your son?

DUMONT. Dear boy, there is always a variety of considerations. But the moment is ill chosen for dispute; to-night, at least, let our felicity be unalloyed. (*Looking off L. C.*) Our guests arrive: here is our good Curate, and here our cheerful Notary.

CHARLES. His old infirmity, I fear.

DUMONT. But Charles—dear boy!—at your wedding feast! I should have taken it unneighbourly had he come strictly sober.

SCENE II

To these, by the door L. C., the CURATE *and the* NOTARY, *arm in arm; the latter owl-like and titubant.*

CURATE. Peace be on this house!

NOTARY (*singing*). "Prove an excuse for the glass."

DUMONT. Welcome, excellent neighbours! The Church and the Law.

CURATE. And you, Charles, let me hope your feelings are in solemn congruence with this momentous step.

NOTARY (*digging* CHARLES *in the ribs*). Married? Lovely bride? Prove an excuse!

DUMONT (*to* CURATE). I fear our friend? perhaps? as usual? eh?

CURATE. Possibly: I had not yet observed it.

DUMONT. Well, well, his heart is good.

CURATE. He doubtless meant it kindly.

NOTARY. Where's Aline?

ALINE. Coming, sir! (NOTARY *makes for her.*)

CURATE (*capturing him*). You will infallibly expose yourself to misconstruction. (*To* CHARLES.) Where is your commanding officer?

CHARLES. Why, sir, we have quite an alert. Information has been received from Lyons that the notorious malefactor, Robert Macaire, has broken prison, and the Brigadier is now scouring the country in his pursuit. I myself am instructed to watch the visitors to our house.

DUMONT. That will do, Charles: you may go. (*Exit* CHARLES.) You have considered the case I laid before you?

NOTARY. Considered a case?

DUMONT. Yes, yes. Charles, you know, Charles. Can he marry? under these untoward and peculiar circumstances, can he marry?

NOTARY. Now, lemme tell you: marriage is a contract to which there are two contracting parties. That being clear, I am prepared to argue categorically that your son Charles —who, it appears, is not your son Charles—I am prepared to argue that one party to a contract being null and void, the other party to a contract cannot by law oblige or constrain the first party to contract or bind himself to any contract, except the other party be able to see his way clearly to constract himself with him. I donno if I make myself clear?

DUMONT. No.

NOTARY. Now, lemme tell you: by applying justice of peace might possibly afford relief.

DUMONT. But how?

NOTARY. Ay, there's the rub.

DUMONT. But what am I to do? He's not my son, I tell you: Charles is not my son.

NOTARY. I know.

DUMONT. Perhaps a glass of wine would clear him?

NOTARY. That's what I want. (*They go out, L. U. E.*)

ALINE. And now, if you've done deranging my table, to the cellar for the wine, the whole pack of you. (*Manet sola, considering table.*) There: it's like a garden. If I had as sweet a table for my wedding, I would marry the Notary.

SCENE III

The Stage remains vacant. Enters, by door L. C., MACAIRE, *followed by* BERTRAND *with the bundle; in the traditional costume.*

MACAIRE. Good! No police.

BERTRAND (*looking off, L. C.*). Sold again!

MACAIRE. This is a favoured spot, Bertrand: ten minutes from the frontier: ten minutes from escape. Blessings on that frontier line! The criminal hops across, and lo! the reputable man. (*Reading*) "*Auberge des Adrets*, by John Paul Dumont." A table set for company; this is fate: Bertrand, are we the first arrivals? An office; a cabinet; a cash-box—aha! and a cash-box, golden within. A money-box is like a Quaker beauty: demure without, but what a figure of a woman! Outside gallery: an architectural feature I approve; I count it a convenience both for love and war: the troubadour—twang-twang; the craftsman—— (*Makes as if turning key.*) The kitchen window: humming with cookery; truffles, before Jove! I was born for truffles. Cock your hat: meat, wine, rest, and occupation; men to gull, women to fool, and still the door open, the great unbolted door of the frontier!

BERTRAND. Macaire, I'm hungry.

MACAIRE. Bertrand, excuse me, you are a sensualist. I should have left you in the stone-yard at Lyons, and written no passport but my own. Your soul is incorporate with your stomach. Am I not hungry, too? My body, thanks to immortal Jupiter, is but the boy that holds the kite-string; my aspirations and designs swim like the kite sky-high, and overlook an empire.

BERTRAND. If I could get a full meal and a pound in my pocket I would hold my tongue.

MACAIRE. Dreams, dreams! We are what we are; and what are we? Who are you? who cares? Who am I? myself. What do we come from? an accident. What's a mother? an old woman. A father? the gentleman who beats

her. What is crime? discovery. Virtue? opportunity. Politics? a pretext. Affection? an affectation. Morality? an affair of latitude. Punishment? this side the frontier. Reward? the other. Property? plunder. Business? other people's money—not mine, by God! and the end of life to live till we are hanged.

BERTRAND. Macaire, I came into this place with my tail between my legs already, and hungry besides; and then you get to flourishing, and it depresses me worse than the chaplain in the jail.

MACAIRE. What is a chaplain? A man they pay to say what you don't want to hear.

BERTRAND. And who are you after all? and what right have you to talk like that? By what I can hear, you've been the best part of your life in quod; and as for me, since I've followed you, what sort of luck have I had? Sold again! A boose, a blue fright, two years' hard labour, and the police hot foot after us even now.

MACAIRE. What is life? A boose and the police.

BERTRAND. Of course, I know you're clever; I admire you down to the ground, and I'll starve without you. But I can't stand it, and I'm off. Good-bye: good luck to you, old man; and if you want the bundle——

MACAIRE. I am a gentleman of a mild disposition, and, I thank my maker, elegant manners; but rather than be betrayed by such a thing as you are, with the courage of a hare, and the manners, by the Lord Harry, of a jumping-jack—— (*He shows his knife.*)

BERTRAND. Put it up, put it up: I'll do what you want.

MACAIRE. What is obedience? fear. So march straight, or look for mischief. It's not *bon ton*, I know, and far from friendly. But what is friendship? convenience. But we lose time in this amiable dalliance. Come, now, an effort of deportment: the head thrown back, a jaunty carriage of the leg; crook gracefully the elbow. Thus. 'Tis better. (*Calling.*) House, house here!

BERTRAND. Are you mad? We haven't a brass farthing.

MACAIRE. Now!—But before we leave!

SCENE IV

To these, DUMONT

DUMONT. Gentlemen, what can a plain man do for your service?

MACAIRE. My good man, in a roadside inn one cannot look for the impossible. Give one what small wine and what country fare you can produce.

DUMONT. Gentlemen, you come here upon a most auspicious day, a red-letter day for me and my poor house, when all are welcome. Suffer me, with all delicacy, to inquire if you are not in somewhat narrow circumstances?

MACAIRE. My good creature, you are strangely in error; one is rolling in gold.

BERTRAND. And very hungry.

DUMONT. Dear me, and on this happy occasion I had registered a vow that every poor traveller should have his keep for nothing, and a pound in his pocket to help him on his journey.

MACAIRE. A pound in his pocket?
BERTRAND. Keep for nothing?
MACAIRE. Bitten!
BERTRAND. Sold again!
Aside.

DUMONT. I will send you what we have: poor fare, perhaps, for gentlemen like you.

SCENE V

MACAIRE, BERTRAND; *afterwards* CHARLES, *who appears on the gallery, and comes down.*

BERTRAND. I told you so. Why will you fly so high?

MACAIRE. Bertrand, don't crush me. A pound: a fortune! With a pound to start upon—two pounds, for I'd have borrowed yours—three months from now I might have

been driving in my barouche, with you behind it, Bertrand, in a tasteful livery.

BERTRAND (*seeing* CHARLES). Lord, a policeman!

MACAIRE. Steady! What is a policeman? Justice's blind eye. (*To* CHARLES.) I think, sir, you are in the force?

CHARLES. I am, sir, and it was in that character——

MACAIRE. Ah, sir, a fine service!

CHARLES. It is, sir, and if your papers——

MACAIRE. You become your uniform. Have you a mother? Ah, well, well!

CHARLES. My duty, sir——

MACAIRE. They tell me one Macaire—is not that his name, Bertrand?—has broken jail at Lyons?

CHARLES. He has, sir, and it is precisely for that reason——

MACAIRE. Well, good-bye. (*Shaking* CHARLES *by the hand and leading him towards the door, L. U. E.*) Sweet spot, sweet spot. The scenery is . . . (*kisses his finger-tips. Exit* CHARLES). And now, what is a policeman?

BERTRAND. A bobby.

SCENE VI

MACAIRE, BERTRAND; *to whom* ALINE *with tray; and afterwards* MAIDS.

ALINE (*entering with tray, and proceeding to lay table, L.*) My men, you are in better luck than usual. It isn't every day you go shares in a wedding feast.

MACAIRE. A wedding? Ah, and you're the bride.

ALINE. What makes you fancy that?

MACAIRE. Heavens, am I blind?

ALINE. Well, then, I wish I was.

MACAIRE. I take you at the word: have me.

ALINE. You will never be hanged for modesty.

MACAIRE. Modesty is for the poor: when one is rich and nobly born, 'tis but a clog. I love you. What is your name?

ALINÉ. Guess again, and you'll guess wrong. (*Enter the other servants with wine baskets.*) Here, set the wine down. No, that is the old Burgundy for the wedding party. These gentlemen must put up with a different bin. (*Setting wine before* MACAIRE *and* BERTRAND, *who are at table, L.*)

MACAIRE (*drinking*). Vinegar, by the supreme Jove!

BERTRAND. Sold again!

MACAIRE. Now, Bertrand, mark me. (*Before the servants, he exchanges the bottle for the one in front of* DUMONT'S *place at the head of the other table.*) Was it well done?

BERTRAND. Immense!

MACAIRE (*emptying his glass into* BERTRAND'S). There, Bertrand, you may finish that. Ha! music?

SCENE VII

To these, from the inn, L. U. E., DUMONT, CHARLES, *the* CURATE, *the* NOTARY *jigging; from the inn, R. U. E.,* FIDDLERS *playing and dancing; and through the door L. C.,* GORIOT, ERNESTINE, PEASANTS, *dancing likewise. Air: "Haste to the Wedding." As the parties meet, the music ceases.*

DUMONT. Welcome, neighbours! welcome, friends! Ernestine, here is my Charles, no longer mine. A thousand welcomes. O the gay day! O the auspicious wedding! (CHARLES, ERNESTINE, DUMONT, GORIOT, CURATE, *and* NOTARY *sit to the wedding feast; Peasants,* FIDDLERS, *and* MAIDS, *grouped at back, drinking from the barrel.*) O, I must have all happy around me.

GORIOT. Then help the soup.

DUMONT. Give me leave: I must have all happy. Shall these poor gentlemen upon a day like this drink ordinary wine? Not so: I shall drink it. (*To* MACAIRE, *who is just about to fill his glass.*) Don't touch it, sir! Aline, give me

that gentleman's bottle and take him mine: with old Dumont's compliments.

MACAIRE. What?

BERTRAND. Change the bottle?

MACAIRE. Bitten! } *Aside.*

BERTRAND. Sold again. }

DUMONT. Yes, all shall be happy.

GORIOT. I tell 'ee, help the soup!

DUMONT (*begins to help soup. Then, dropping ladle*). One word: a matter of detail: Charles is not my son. (*All exclaim.*) O no, he is not my son. Perhaps, I should have mentioned it before.

CHARLES. I am not your son, sir?

DUMONT. O no, far from it.

GORIOT. Then who the devil's son be he?

DUMONT. O, I don't know. It's an odd tale, a romantic tale: it may amuse you. It was twenty years ago, when I kept the *Golden Head* at Lyons; Charles was left upon my doorstep in a covered basket, with sufficient money to support the child till he should come of age. There was no mark upon the linen, nor any clue but one: an unsigned letter from the father of the child, which he strictly charged me to preserve. It was to prove his identity: he, of course, would know the contents, and he only; so I keep it safe in the third compartment of my cash-box, with the ten thousand francs I've saved for his dowry. Here is the key; it's a patent key. To-day the poor boy is twenty-one, to-morrow to be married. I did perhaps hope the father would appear: there was a Marquis coming; he wrote me for a room; I gave him the best, Number Thirteen, which you have all heard of: I did hope it might be he, for a Marquis, you know, is always genteel. But no, you see. As for me, I take you all to witness I'm as innocent of him as the babe unborn.

MACAIRE. Ahem! I think you said the linen bore an M?

DUMONT. Pardon me: the markings were cut off.

MACAIRE. True. The basket white, I think?

DUMONT. Brown, brown.

MACAIRE. Ah! brown—a whitey-brown.

GORIOT. I tell 'ee what, Dumont, this is all very well; but in that case, I'll be danged if he gets my daater. (*General consternation.*)

DUMONT. O Goriot, let's have happy faces!

GORIOT. Happy faces be danged! I want to marry my daater; I want your son. But who be this? I don't know, and you don't know, and he don't know. He may be anybody; by Jarge, he may be nobody! (*Exclamations.*)

CURATE. The situation is crepuscular.

ERNESTINE. Father, and Mr. Dumont (and you too, Charles), I wish to say one word. You gave us leave to fall in love; we fell in love; and as for me, my father, I will either marry Charles, or die a maid.

CHARLES. And you, sir, would you rob me in one day of both a father and a wife?

DUMONT (*weeping*). Happy faces, happy faces!

GORIOT. I know nothing about robbery; but she cannot marry without my consent, and that she cannot get.

DUMONT. O dear, O dear!
ALINE. What, spoil the wedding?
ERNESTINE. O father!
CHARLES. Sir, sir, you would not——
} *Together.*

GORIOT (*exasperated*). I wun't, and what's more, I shan't.

NOTARY. I donno if I make myself clear?

DUMONT. Goriot, do let's have happy faces!

GORIOT. Fudge! Fudge!! Fudge!!!

CURATE. Possibly on application to this conscientious jurist, light may be obtained.

ALL. The Notary; yes, yes; the Notary!

DUMONT. Now, how about this marriage?

NOTARY. Marriage is a contract, to which there are two constracting parties, John Doe and Richard Roe. I dunno if I make myself clear?

ALINE. Poor lamb!

CURATE. Silence, my friend; you will expose yourself to misconstruction.

MACAIRE (*taking the stage*). As an entire stranger in this painful scene, will you permit a gentleman and a traveller to interject one word? There sits the young man, full, I am sure, of pleasing qualities; here the young maiden, by her own confession bashfully consenting to the match; there sits that dear old gentleman, a lover of bright faces like myself, his own now dimmed with sorrow; and here—(may I be allowed to add?)—here sits this noble Roman, a father like myself, and like myself the slave of duty. Last you have me—Baron Henri-Frédéric de Latour de Main de la Tonnerre de Brest, the man of the world and the man of delicacy. I find you all—permit me the expression—gravelled. A marriage and an obstacle. Now, what is marriage? The union of two souls, and, what is possibly more romantic, the fusion of two dowries. What is an obstacle? the devil. And this obstacle? to me, as a man of family, the obstacle seems grave; but to me, as a man and a brother, what is it but a word? O my friend (*to* GORIOT), you whom I single out as the victim of the same noble failings with myself—of pride of birth, of pride of honesty—O my friend, reflect. Go now apart with your dishevelled daughter, your tearful son-in-law, and let their plaints constrain you. Believe me, when you come to die, you will recall with pride this amiable weakness.

GORIOT. I shan't, and what's more, I wun't. (CHARLES *and* ERNESTINE *lead him up stage, protesting. All rise, except* NOTARY.)

DUMONT (*front R., shaking hands with* MACAIRE). Sir, you have a noble nature. (MACAIRE *picks his pocket.*) Dear me, dear me, and you are rich.

MACAIRE. I own, sir, I deceived you: I feared some wounding offer, and my pride replied. But, to be quite frank with you, you behold me here, the Baron Henri-Frédéric de Latour de Main de la Tonnerre de Brest, and between my simple manhood and the infinite these rags are all.

DUMONT. Dear me, and with this noble pride, my gratitude is useless. For I, too, have delicacy: I understand you could not stoop to take a gift.

MACAIRE. A gift? a small one? never!
DUMONT. And I will never wound you by the offer.
MACAIRE. Bitten.
BERTRAND. Sold again. } *Aside.*

GORIOT (*taking the stage*). But, look'ee here, he can't marry.

MACAIRE. Hey?
DUMONT. Ah!
ALINE. Heyday!
CURATE. Wherefore?
ERNESTINE. Oh!
CHARLES. Ah! } *Together.*

GORIOT. Not without his veyther's consent! And he hasn't got it; and what's more, he can't get it; and what's more, he hasn't got a veyther to get it from. It's the law of France.

ALINE. Then the law of France ought to be ashamed of itself.

ERNESTINE. O, couldn't we ask the Notary again?
CURATE. Indubitably you may ask him.

MACAIRE. Can't they marry?
DUMONT. Can't he marry?
ALAINE. Can't she marry?
ERNESTINE. Can't we marry?
CHARLES. Can't I marry?
GORIOT. Bain't I right? } *Together.*

NOTARY. Constracting parties.

CURATE. Possibly to-morrow at an early hour he may be more perspicuous.

GORIOT. Ay, before he've time to get at it.

NOTARY. Unoffending jurisconsult overtaken by sorrow. Possibly by applying justice of peace might afford relief.

MACAIRE. Bravo!
DUMONT. Excellent!
CHARLES. Let's go at once!
ALINE. The very thing.
ERNESTINE. Yes, this minute! } *Together.*

GORIOT. I'll go. I don't mind getting advice, but I wun't take it.

MACAIRE. My friends, one word: I perceive by your downcast looks that you have not recognised the true nature of your responsibility as citizens of time. What is care? impiety. Joy? the whole duty of man. Here is an opportunity of duty it were sinful to forego. With a word I could lighten your hearts; but I prefer to quicken your heels, and send you forth on your ingenuous errand with happy faces and smiling thoughts, the physicians of your own recovery. Fiddlers, to your catgut. Up, Bertrand, and show them how one foots it in society; forward, girls, and choose me every one the lad she loves; Dumont, benign old man, lead forth our blushing Curate; and you, O bride, embrace the uniform of your beloved, and help us dance in your wedding-day. (*Dance, in the course of which* MACAIRE *picks* DUMONT'S *pocket of his keys, selects the key of the cash-box, and returns the others to his pocket. In the end all dance out; the wedding-party, headed by* FIDDLERS, *L. C.; the* MAIDS and ALINE *into the inn, R. U. E. Manent* BERTRAND *and* MACAIRE.

SCENE VIII

MACAIRE, BERTRAND, *who instantly takes a bottle from the wedding-table, and sits with it, L.*

MACAIRE. Bertand, there's a devil of a want of a father here.

BERTRAND. Ay, if we only knew where to find him.

MACAIRE. Bertrand, look at me: I am Macaire; I am that father.

BERTRAND. You, Macaire? you a father?

MACAIRE. Not yet: but in five minutes. I am capable of anything. (*Producing key.*) What think you of this?

BERTRAND. That? Is it a key?

MACAIRE. Ay, boy, and what besides? my diploma of respectability, my patent of fatherhood. I prigged it—in

the ardour of the dance I prigged it; I change it beyond recognition, thus (*twists the handle of the key*); and now . . . ! Where is my long-lost child? produce my young policeman, show me my gallant boy.

BERTRAND. I don't understand.

MACAIRE. Dear innocence, how should you? Your brains are in your fists. Go and keep watch. (*He goes into the office, and returns with the cash-box.*) Keep watch, I say.

BERTRAND. Where?

MACAIRE. Everywhere. (*He opens the box.*)

BERTRAND. Gold.

MACAIRE. Hands off! Keep watch. (BERTRAND *at back of stage.*) Beat slower, my paternal heart! The third compartment; let me see.

BERTRAND. S'st! (MACAIRE *shuts box.*) No: false alarm.

MACAIRE. The third compartment. Ay, here it——

BERTRAND. S'st! (*Same business.*) No: fire away.

MACAIRE. The third compartment: it must be this.

BERTRAND. S'st! (MACAIRE *keeps box open, watching* BERTRAND.) All serene; it's the wind.

MACAIRE. Now, see here! (*He darts his knife into the stage.*) I will either be backed as a man should be, or from this minute out I'll work alone. Do you understand? I said alone.

BERTRAND. For the Lord's sake, Macaire!——

MACAIRE. Ay, here it is. (*Reading letter.*) "Preserve this letter secretly; its terms are known only to you and me: hence, when the time comes, I shall repeat them, and my son will recognise his father." Signed: "Your Unknown Benefactor." (*He hums it over twice and replaces it. Then, fingering the gold.*) Gold! The yellow enchantress, happiness ready-made and laughing in my face! Gold: what is gold? The world; the term of ills; the empery of all: the multitudinous babble of the 'change, the sailing from all points of freighted argosies; music, wine, a palace; the doors of the bright theatre, the key of consciences, and love —love's whistle! All this below my itching fingers; and to

set this by, turn a deaf ear upon the siren present, and condescend once more, naked, into the ring with fortune—Macaire, how few would do it! But you, Macaire, you are compacted of more subtile clay. No cheap immediate pilfering: no retail trade of petty larceny; but swoop at the heart of the position, and clutch all!

BERTRAND (*at his shoulder*). Halves!

MACAIRE. Halves? (*He locks the box.*) Bertrand, I am a father. (*Replaces box in office.*)

BERTRAND (*looking after him*). Well, I—am—damned!

DROP.

ACT II

When the curtain rises, the night has come. A hanging cluster of lighted lamps over each table, R. and L. MACAIRE, *R., smoking a cigarette;* BERTRAND, *L., with a church-warden: each with bottle and glass.*

SCENE I

MACAIRE, BERTRAND

MACAIRE. Bertrand, I am content: a child might play with me. Does your pipe draw well?

BERTRAND. Like a factory chimney. This is my notion of life: liquor, a chair, a table to put my feet on, a fine clean church-warden, and no police.

MACAIRE. Bertrand, do you see these changing exhalations? do you see these blue rings and spirals, weaving their dance, like a round of fairies, on the footless air?

BERTRAND. I see 'em right enough.

MACAIRE. Man of little vision, expound me these meteors? what do they signify, O wooden-head? Clod, of what do they consist?

BERTRAND. Damned bad tobacco.

MACAIRE. I will give you a little course of science. Everything, Bertrand (much as it may surprise you) has three states: a vapour, a liquid, a solid. These are fortune in the vapour: these are ideas. What are ideas? the protoplasm of wealth. To your head—which, by the way, is a solid, Bertrand—what are they but foul air? To mine, to my prehensile and constructive intellects, see, as I grasp and work them, to what lineaments of the future they transform themselves: a palace, a barouche, a pair of luminous footmen, plate, wine, respect, and to be honest!

BERTRAND. But what's the sense in honesty?

MACAIRE. The sense? You see me: Macaire: elegant, immoral, invincible in cunning; well, Bertrand, much as it may surprise you, I am simply damned by my dishonesty.

BERTRAND. No!

MACAIRE. The honest man, Bertrand, that's God's noblest work. He carries the bag, my boy. Would you have me define honesty? the strategic point for theft. Bertrand, if I'd three hundred a year, I'd be honest to-morrow.

BERTRAND. Ah! Don't you wish you may get it!

MACAIRE. Bertrand, I will bet you my head against your own—the longest odds I can imagine—that with honesty for my spring-board, I leap through history like a paper hoop, and come out among posterity heroic and immortal.

SCENE II

To these all the former characters, less the NOTARY. *The fiddles are heard without, playing dolefully. Air: "O dear, what can the matter be?" in time to which the procession enters.*

MACAIRE. Well, friends, what cheer?
ALINE. No wedding, no wedding!
GORIOT. I told 'ee he can't, and he can't.
DUMONT. Dear, dear me!
ERNESTINE. They won't let us marry.
CHARLES. No wife, no father, no nothing!
Together.

CURATE. The facts have justified the worst anticipations of our absent friend, the Notary.

MACAIRE. I perceive I must reveal myself.

DUMONT. God bless me, no!

MACAIRE. My friends, I had meant to preserve a strict incognito, for I was ashamed (I own it!) of this poor accoutrement; but when I see a face that I can render happy, say, my old Dumont, should I hesitate to work the change? Hear me, then, and you (*to the others*) prepare a smiling countenance. (*Repeating.*) "Preserve this letter secretly; its terms are only known to you and me; hence when the

time comes, I shall repeat them, and my son will recognise his father.—Your Unknown Benefactor."

DUMONT. The words! the letter! Charles, alas! it is your father!

CHARLES. Good Lord! (*General consternation.*)

BERTRAND (*aside: smiting his brow*). I see it now: sublime!

CURATE. A highly singular eventuality.

GORIOT. Him? O well, then, I wun't. (*Goes up.*)

MACAIRE. Charles, to my arms! (*Business*) Ernestine, your second father waits to welcome you. (*Business.*) Goriot, noble old man, I grasp your hand. (*He doesn't.*) And you, Dumont, how shall your unknown benefactor thank you for your kindness to his boy? (*A dead pause.*) Charles, to my arms!

CHARLES. My father, you are still something of a stranger. I hope—er—in the course of time—I hope that may be somewhat mended. But I confess that I have so long regarded Mr. Dumont——

MACAIRE. Love him still, dear boy, love him still. I have not returned to be a burden on your heart, nor much, comparatively, on your pocket. A place by the fire, dear boy, a crust for my friend, Bertrand. (*A dead pause.*) Ah, well, this is a different home-coming from that I fancied when I left the letter: I dreamed to grow rich. Charles, you remind me of your sainted mother.

CHARLES. I trust, sir, you do not think yourself less welcome for your poverty.

MACAIRE. Nay, nay—more welcome, more welcome. O, I know your—(*business*) backs! Besides, my poverty is noble. Political . . . Dumont, what are your politics?

DUMONT. A plain old republican, my lord.

MACAIRE. And yours, my goor Goriot?

GORIOT. I be a royalist, I be, and so be my daater.

MACAIRE. How strange is the coincidence! The party that I sought to found combined the peculiarities of both: a patriotic enterprise in which I fell. This humble fellow . . . have I introduced him? You behold in us the em-

bodiment of aristocracy and democracy. Bertrand, shake hands with my family. (BERTRAND *is rebuffed by one and the other in dead silence.*)

BERTRAND. Sold again!

MACAIRE. Charles, to my arms! (*Business.*)

ERNESTINE. Well, but now that he has a father of some kind, cannot the marriage go on?

MACAIRE. Angel, this very night: I burn to take my grandchild on my knees.

GORIOT. Be you that young man's veyther?

MACAIRE. Ay, and what a father!

GORIOT. Then all I've got to say is, I shan't and I wun't.

MACAIRE. Ah, friends, friends, what a satisfaction it is, what a sight is virtue! I came among you in this poor attire to test you; how nobly have you borne the test! But my disguise begins to irk me: who will lend me a good suit? (*Business.*)

SCENE III

To these, the MARQUIS, *L. C.*

MARQUIS. Is this the house of John Paul Dumont, once of Lyons?

DUMONT. It is, sir, and I am he, at your disposal.

MARQUIS. I am the Marquis Villers-Cotterêts de la Cheré de Médoc. (*Sensation.*)

MACAIRE. Marquis, delighted, I am sure.

MARQUIS (*to* DUMONT). I come, as you perceive, unfollowed; my errand, therefore, is discreet. I come (*producing notes from breast-pocket*) equipped with thirty thousand francs; my errand, therefore, must be generous. Can you not guess?

DUMONT. Not I, my Lord.

MARQUIS (*repeating*). "Preserve this letter," *etc.*

MACAIRE. Bitten.

BERTRAND. Sold again (*aside*). (*A pause.*)

ALINE. Well, I never did!

DUMONT. Two fathers!

MARQUIS. Two? Impossible!

DUMONT. Not at all. This is the other.

MARQUIS. This man?

MACAIRE. This is the man, my lord; here stands the father; Charles, to my arms! (CHARLES *backs.*)

DUMONT. He knew the letter.

MARQUIS. Well, but so did I.

CURATE. The judgment of Solomon.

GORIOT. What did I tell 'ee? he can't marry.

ERNESTINE. Couldn't they both consent?

MARQUIS. But he's my living image.

MACAIRE. Mine, Marquis, mine.

MARQUIS. My figure, I think?

MACAIRE. Ah, Charles, Charles!

CURATE. We used to think his physiognomy resembled Dumont's.

DUMONT. Come to look at him, he's really like Goriot.

ERNESTINE. O papa, I hope he's not my brother.

GORIOT. What be talking of? I tell 'ee, he's like our Curate.

CHARLES. Gentlemen, my head aches.

MARQUIS. I have it: the involuntary voice of nature. Look at me, my son.

MACAIRE. Nay, Charles, but look at me.

CHARLES. Gentlemen, I am unconscious of the smallest natural inclination for either.

MARQUIS. Another thought: what was his mother's name?

MACAIRE. What was the name of his mother by you?

MARQUIS. Sir, you are silenced.

MACAIRE. Silenced by honour. I had rather lose my boy than compromise his sainted mother.

MARQUIS. A thought: twins might explain it: had you not two foundlings?

DUMONT. Nay, sir, one only; and judging by the miseries of this evening, I should say, thank God!

MACAIRE. My friends, leave me alone with the Marquis. It is only a father that can understand a father's heart.

Bertrand, follow the members of my family. (*They troop out, L. U. E. and R. U. E., the fiddlers playing. Air: "O dear, what can the matter be?"*)

SCENE IV

MACAIRE, MARQUIS

MARQUIS. Well, sir?

MACAIRE. My lord, I feel for you. (*Business. They sit, R.*)

MARQUIS. And now, sir?

MACAIRE. The bond that joins us is remarkable and touching.

MARQUIS. Well, sir?

MACAIRE (*touching him on the breast*). You have there thirty thousand francs.

MARQUIS. Well, sir.

MACAIRE. I was but thinking of the inequalities of life, my lord: that I who, for all you know, may be the father of your son, should have nothing; and that you, for all I know, may be the father of mine, should be literally bulging with bank notes. . . . Where do you keep them at night?

MARQUIS. Under my pillow. I think it rather ingenious.

MACAIRE. Admirably so! I applaud the device.

MARQUIS. Well, sir?

MACAIRE. Do you snuff, my lord?

MARQUIS. No, sir, I do not.

MACAIRE. My lord, I am a poor man.

MARQUIS. Well, sir? and what of that?

MACAIRE. The affections, my lord, are priceless. Money will not buy them; or, at least, it takes a great deal.

MARQUIS. Sir, your sentiments do you honour.

MACAIRE. My lord, you are rich.

MARQUIS. Well, sir?

MACAIRE. Now follow me, I beseech you. Here am I,

my lord: and there, if I may so express myself, are you. Each has the father's heart, and there we are equal; each claims yon interesting lad, and there again we are on a par. But, my lord—and here we come to the inequality, and what I consider the unfairness of the thing—you have thirty thousand francs, and I, my lord, have not a rap. You mark me, not a rap, my lord! My lord put yourself in my position: consider what must be my feelings, my desires; and—hey?

MARQUIS. I fail to grasp. . . .

MACAIRE (*with irritation*). My dear man, there is the door of the house: here am I: there (*touching* MARQUIS *on the breast*) are thirty thousand francs. Well, now?

MARQUIS. I give you my word of honour, sir, I gather nothing: my mind is quite unused to such prolonged exertion. If the boy be yours, he is not mine; if he be mine, he is not yours; and if he is neither of ours, or both of ours, ...in short, my mind. . . .

MACAIRE. My lord, will you lay those thirty thousand francs upon the table?

MARQUIS. I fail to grasp . . . but if it will in any way oblige you. . . . (*Does so.*)

MACAIRE. Now, my lord, follow me: I take them up; you see? I put them in my pocket? you follow me? This is my hat; here is my stick; and here is my—my friend's bundle.

MARQUIS. But that is my cloak.

MACAIRE. Precisely. Now, my lord, one more effort of your lordship's mind. If I were to go out of that door with the full intention—follow me close—the full intention of never being heard of more, what would you do?

MARQUIS. I?—send for the police.

MACAIRE. Take your money! (*Dashing down the notes.*) Man, if I met you in a lane. (*He drops his head upon the table.*)

MARQUIS. The poor soul is insane. The other man, whom I suppose to be his keeper, is very much to blame.

MACAIRE (*raising his head*). I have a light! (*To* MARQUIS.) With invincible owlishness, my lord, I cannot strug-

gle. I pass you by; I leave you gaping by the wayside; I blush to have a share in the progeny of such an owl. Off, off, and send the tapster!

MARQUIS. Poor fellow!

SCENE V

MACAIRE, *to whom* BERTRAND. *Afterwards* DUMONT

BERTRAND. Well?

MACAIRE. Bitten.

BERTRAND. Sold again.

MACAIRE. Had he the wit of a lucifer match! But what can gods or men against stupidity? Still, I have a trick. Where is that damned old man?

DUMONT (*entering*). I hear you want me.

MACAIRE. Ah, my good old Dumont, this is very sad.

DUMONT. Dear me, what is wrong?

MACAIRE. Dumont, you had a dowry for my son?

DUMONT. I had; I have: ten thousand france.

MACAIRE. It's a poor thing, but it must do. Dumont, I bury my old hopes, my old paternal tenderness.

DUMONT. What? is he not your son?

MACAIRE. Pardon me, my friend. The Marquis claims my boy. I will not seek to deny that he attempted to corrupt me, or that I spurned his gold. It was thirty thousand.

DUMONT. Noble soul!

MACAIRE. One has a heart. . . . He spoke, Dumont, that proud noble spoke, of the advantages to our beloved Charles; and in my father's heart a voice arose, louder than thunder. Dumont, was I unselfish? The voice said no; the voice, Dumont, up and told me to begone.

DUMONT. To begone? to go?

MACAIRE. To begone, Dumont, and to go. Both, Dumont. To leave my son to marry, and be rich and happy as

the son of another; to creep forth myself, old, penniless, broken-hearted, exposed to the inclemencies of heaven and the rebuffs of the police.

DUMONT. This is what I had looked for at your hands. Noble, noble man!

MACAIRE. One has a heart . . . and yet, Dumont, it can hardly have escaped your penetration that if I were to shift from this hostelry without a farthing, and leave my offspring to literally wallow among millions, I should play the part of little better than ass.

DUMONT. But I had thought . . . I had fancied. . .

MACAIRE. No, Dumont, you had not; do not seek to impose upon my simplicity. What you did think was this, Dumont: for the sake of this noble father, for the sake of this son whom he denies for his own interest—I mean for his interest—no, I mean, for his own—well, anyway, in order to keep up the general atmosphere of sacrifice and nobility, I must hand over this dowry to the Baron Henri-Frédéric de Latour de Main de la Tonnerre de Brest.

DUMONT. Noble, O noble!
BERTRAND. Beautiful, O beautiful! } *Together: each shaking him by a hand*

DUMONT. Now Charles is rich he needs it not. For whom could it more fittingly be set aside than for his noble father? I will give it you at once.

BERTRAND. At once, at once!

MACAIRE (*aside to* BERTRAND). Hang on. (*Aloud.*) Charles, Charles, my lost boy! (*He falls weeping at L. table.* DUMONT *enters the office and brings down cash-box to table R. He feels in all his pockets:* BERTRAND, *from behind him, making signs to* MACAIRE, *which the latter does not see.*)

DUMONT. That's strange. I can't find the key. It's a patent key.

BERTRAND (*behind* DUMONT, *making signs to* MACAIRE.) The key, he can't find the key.

MACAIRE. O yes, I remember. I heard it drop. (*Drops key.*) And here it is before my eyes.

DUMONT. That? That's yours. I saw it drop.

MACAIRE. I give you my word of honour I heard it fall five minutes back.

DUMONT. But I saw it.

MACAIRE. Impossible. It must be yours.

DUMONT. It is like mine, indeed. How came it in your pocket?

MACAIRE. Bitten. (*Aside.*)

BERTRAND. Sold again (*aside*). . . You forget, Baron, it's the key of my valise: I gave it you to keep in consequence of the hole in my pocket.

MACAIRE. True, true; and that explains.

DUMONT. O, that explains. Now, all we have to do is to find mine. It's a patent key. You heard it drop?

MACAIRE. Distinctly.

BERTRAND. So I did: distinctly.

DUMONT. Here, Aline, Babette, Goriot, Curate, Charles, everybody, come here and look for my key!

SCENE VI

To these with candles, all the former characters, except FIDDLERS, PEASANTS *and* NOTARY. *They hunt for the key.*

DUMONT. It's bound to be here. We all heard it drop.

MARQUIS (*with* BERTRAND'S *bundle*). Is this it?

ALL (*with fury*). No.

BERTRAND. Hands off, that's my luggage. (*Hunt resumed.*)

DUMONT. I heard it drop, as plain as I ever heard anything.

MARQUIS. By the way (*all start up*), what are we looking for?

ALL (*with fury*). O!

DUMONT. Will you have the kindness to find my key? (*Hunt resumed.*)

CURATE. What description of a key——

DUMONT. A patent, patent, patent, patent key!

MACAIRE. I have it. Here it is.

ALL (*with relief*). Ah!!

DUMONT. That? What do you mean? That's yours.

MACAIRE. Pardon me.

DUMONT. It is.

MACAIRE. It isn't.

DUMONT. I tell you it is: look at that twisted handle.

MACAIRE. It can't be mine, and so it must be yours.

DUMONT. It is NOT. Feel in your pockets. (*To the others.*) Will you have the kindness to find my patent key?

ALL. O!! (*Hunt resumed.*)

MACAIRE. Ah, well, you're right. (*He slips key into* DUMONT'S *pocket.*) An idea: suppose you felt in your pocket?

ALL (*rising*). Yes! Suppose you did!

DUMONT. I will not feel in my pockets. How could it be there? It's a patent key. This is more than any man can bear. First, Charles is one man's son, and then he's another's, and then he's nobody's, and be damned to him! And then there's my key lost; and then there's your key! What is your key? Where is your key? Where isn't it? And why is it like mine, only mine's a patent? The long and short of it is this: that I'm going to bed, and that you're all going to bed, and that I refuse to hear another word upon that subject or upon any subject. There!

MACAIRE. Bitten. }
BERTRAND. Sold again. } *Aside.*

(ALINE *and* MAIDS *extinguish hanging lamps over tables, R. and L. Stage lighted only by guests' candles.*)

CHARLES. But, sir, I cannot decently retire to rest till I embrace my honoured parent. Which is it to be?

MACAIRE. Charles, to my——

DUMONT. Embrace neither of them; embrace nobody; there has been too much of this sickening folly. To bed! (*Exit violently R. U. E. All the characters troop slowly upstairs, talking in dumb show.* BERTRAND *and* MACAIRE *remain in front C., watching them go.*)

BERTRAND. Sold again, captain?

MACAIRE. Ay, they will have it.

BERTRAND. It? What?

MACAIRE. The worst, Bertrand. What is man?—a beast of prey. An hour ago, and I'd have taken a crust, and gone in peace. But no: they would trick and juggle, curse them; they would wriggle and cheat! Well, I accept the challenge: war to the knife.

BERTRAND. Murder?

MACAIRE. What is murder? A legal term for a man dying. Call it Fate, and that's philosophy; call me Providence and you talk religion. Die? Why, that is what man is made for; we are full of mortal parts; we are all as good as dead already, we hang so close upon the brink: touch a button, and the strongest falls in dissolution. Now, see how easy: I take you——(*grappling him*).

BERTRAND. Macaire—O no!

MACAIRE. Fool! would I harm a fly, when I had nothing to gain? As the butcher with the sheep, I kill to live; and where is the difference between man and mutton? pride and a tailor's bill. Murder? I know who made that name—a man crouching from the knife! Selfishness made it—the aggregated egotism called society; but I meet that with a selfishness as great. Has he money? Have I none—great powers, none? Well, then, I fatten and manure my life with his.

BERTRAND. You frighten me. Who is it?

MACAIRE. Mark well. (*The* MARQUIS *opens the door of Number Thirteen, and the rest, clustering round, bid him good-night. As they begin to disperse along the gallery he enters, and shuts the door.*) Out, out, brief candle! That man is doomed!

DROP.

ACT III

SCENE I

MACAIRE, BERTRAND.

As the curtain rises, the stage is dark and empty. Enter MACAIRE, *L. U. E., with lantern. He looks about.*

MACAIRE (*calling off*). S'st!

BERTRAND (*entering L. U. E.*). It's creeping dark.

MACAIRE. Blinding dark; and a good job.

BERTRAND. Macaire, I'm cold: my very hair's cold.

MACAIRE. Work, work will warm you: to your keys.

BERTRAND. No, Macaire, it's a horror. You'll not kill him; let's have no bloodshed.

MACAIRE. None: it spoils your clothes. Now, see: you have keys, and you have experience; up that stair, and pick me the lock of that man's door. Pick me the lock of that man's door.

BERTRAND. May I take the light?

MACAIRE. You may not. Go. (BERTRAND *mounts the stairs, and is seen picking the lock of Number Thirteen.*) The earth spins eastward, and the day is at the door. Yet half an hour of covert, and the sun will be afoot, the discoverer, the great policeman. Yet, half-an-hour of night, the good, hiding, practicable night; and lo! at a touch the gas-jet of the universe turned on; and up with the sun gets the providence of honest people, puts off his night-cap, throws up his window, stares out of house—and the rogue must skulk again till dusk. Yet half-an-hour and, Macaire, you shall be safe and rich! If yon fool—my fool—would but miscarry, if the dolt within would hear and leap upon him, I could intervene, kill both, by heaven!—both!—cry murder with the best, and at one stroke reap honour and gold. For, Bertrand dead——

BERTRAND (*from above*). S'st, Macaire!

MACAIRE. Is it done, dear boy? Come down. (BERTRAND *descends.*) Sit down beside this light: this is your ring of safety, budge not beyond—the night is crowded with hobgoblins. See ghosts and tremble like a jelly if you must; but remember men are my concern; and at the creak of a man's foot, hist! (*Sharpening his knife upon his sleeve.*) What is a knife? A plain man's sword.

BERTRAND. Not the knife, Macaire; O, not the knife!

MACAIRE. My name is Self-Defence. (*He goes upstairs and enters Number Thirteen.*)

BERTRAND. He's in. I hear a board creak. What a night, what a night! Will he hear him? O Lord, my poor Macaire! I hear nothing, nothing. The night's as empty as a dream; he must hear him: he cannot help but hear him; and then—O Macaire, Macaire, come back to me. It's death, and it's death, and it's death. Red, red: a corpse. Macaire to kill, Macaire to die? I'd rather starve, I'd rather perish, than either: I'm not fit, I'm not fit, for either! Why, how's this? I want to cry. (*A stroke, and a groan from above.*) God Almighty, one of them's gone! (*He falls with his head on table, R.* MACAIRE *appears at the top of the stairs, descends, comes airily forward, and touches him on the shoulder.* BERTRAND, *with a cry, turns and falls upon his neck.*) O, O, and I thought I had lost him! (*Day breaking.*)

MACAIRE. The contrary, dear boy. (*He produces notes.*)

BERTRAND. What was it like?

MACAIRE. Like? Nothing. A little blood, a dead man.

BERTRAND. Blood! . . . Dead! (*He falls at table sobbing.* MACAIRE *divides the notes into two parts; on the smaller he wipes the bloody knife, and folding the stains inward, thrusts the notes into* BERTRAND'S *face.*)

MACAIRE. What is life without the pleasures of the table!

BERTRAND (*taking and pocketing notes*). Macaire, I can't get over it.

MACAIRE. My mark is the frontier and at top speed.

Don't hang your jaw at me. Up, up, at the double; pick me that cash-box; and let's get the damned house fairly cleared.

BERTRAND. I can't. Did he bleed much?

MACAIRE. Bleed? Must I bleed you? To work, or I'm dangerous.

BERTRAND. It's all right, Macaire; I'm going.

MACAIRE. Better so: an old friend is nearly sacred. (*Full daylight: lights up.* MACAIRE *blows out lantern.*)

BERTRAND. Where's the key?

MACAIRE. Key? I tell you to pick it.

BERTRAND (*with the box*). But it's a patent lock. Where is the key? You had it.

MACAIRE. Will you pick that lock?

BERTRAND. I can't: it's a patent. Where's the key?

MACAIRE. If you will have it, I put it back in that old ass's pocket.

BERTRAND. Bitten, I think. (MACARIE *dancing mad.*)

SCENE II

To these, DUMONT

DUMONT. Ah, friends, up so early? Catching the worm, catching the worm?

MACAIRE. Good-morning, good-morning!

BERTRAND. Early birds, early birds.

Both sitting on the table and dissembling box.

DUMONT. By the way, very remarkable thing: I found that key.

MACAIRE. No?

BERTRAND. O!

DUMONT. Perhaps a still more remarkable thing: it was my key that had the twisted handle.

MACAIRE. I told you so.

DUMONT. Now, what we have to do is to get the cash-box Halloo! what's that you're sitting on?

BERTRAND. Nothing.

MACAIRE. The table? I beg your pardon.

DUMONT. Why, it's my cash-box!

MACAIRE. Why, so it is!

DUMONT. It's very singular.

MACAIRE. Diabolishly singular.

BERTRAND. Early worms, early worms.

DUMONT (*blowing in key*). Well, I suppose you are still willing to begone?

MACAIRE. More than willing, my dear soul: pressed, I may say, for time; for though it had quite escaped my memory, I have an appointment in Turin with a lady of title.

DUMONT (*at box*). It's very odd. (*Blows in key.*) It's a singular thing (*blowing*), key won't turn. It's a patent key. Some one must have tampered with the lock (*blowing*). It's strangely singular, it's singularly singular! I've shown this key to commercial gentlemen all the way from Paris: they never say a better key! (*more business*). Well (*giving it up and looking reproachfully on key*), that's pretty singular.

MACAIRE. Let me try. (*He tries, and flings down the key with a curse.*) Bitten.

BERTRAND. Sold again.

DUMONT (*picking up key*). It's a patent key.

MACAIRE (*to* BERTRAND). The game's up: we must save the swag. (*To* DUMONT.) Sir, since your key, on which I invoke the blight of Egypt, has once more defaulted, my feelings are unequal to a repetition of yesterday's distress, and I shall simply pad the hoof. From Turin you shall receive the address of my banker, and may prosperity attend your ventures. (*To* BERTRAND.) Now, boy! (*To* DUMONT.) Embrace my fatherless child: farewell! (MACAIRE *and* BERTRAND *turn to go off, and are met in the door by the* GENDARMES.)

SCENE III

To these, the BRIGADIER *and* GENDARMES

BRIGADIER. Let no man leave the house.

MACAIRE. Bitten. } *Aside.*
BERTRAND. Sold again. }

DUMONT. Welcome, old friend!

BRIGADIER. It is not the friend that comes; it is the Brigadier. Summon your guests: I must investigate their passports. I am in pursuit of a notorious malefactor, Robert Macaire.

DUMONT. But I was led to believe that both Macaire and his accomplice had been arrested and condemned.

BRIGADIER. They were, but they have once more escaped for the moment, and justice is indefatigable. (*He sits at table, R.*) Dumont, a bottle of white wine.

MACAIRE (*to* DUMONT). My excellent friend, I will discharge your commission, and return with all speed. (*Going.*)

BRIGADIER. Halt!

MACAIRE (*returning: as if he saw* BRIGADIER *for the first time*). Ha? a member of the force? Charmed, I'm sure. But you misconceive me: I return at once, and my friend remains behind to answer for me.

BRIGADIER. Justice is insensible to friendship. I shall deal with you in due time. Dumont, that bottle.

MACAIRE. Sir, my friend and I, who are students of character, would grasp the opportunity to share and—may one add?—to pay the bottle. Dumont, three!

BERTRAND. For God's sake! (*Enter* ALINE *and* MAIDS.)

MACAIRE. My friend is an author: so, in a humbler way, am I. Your knowledge of the criminal classes naturally tempts one to pursue so interesting an acquaintance.

BRIGADIER. Justice is impartial. Gentleman, your health.

MACAIRE. Will not these brave fellows join us?

BRIGADIER. They are on duty; but what matters?

MACAIRE. My dear sir, what is duty? duty is my eye.

BRIGADIER (*solemnly*). And Betty Martin. (GENDARMES *sit at table.*)

MACAIRE (*to* BERTRAND). Dear friend, sit down.

BERTRAND (*sitting down*). O Lord!

BRIGADIER (*to* MACAIRE). You seem to be a gentleman of considerable intelligence.

MACAIRE. I fear, sir, you flatter. One has lived, one has loved, and one remembers: that is all. One's *Lives of Celebrated Criminals* has met with a certain success, and one is ever in quest of fresh material.

DUMONT. By the way, a singular thing about my patent key.

BRIGADIER. This gentleman is speaking.

MACAIRE. Excellent Dumont! he means no harm. This Macaire is not personally known to you?

BRIGADIER. Are you connected with justice?

MACAIRE. Ah, sir, justice is a point above a poor author.

BRIGADIER (*with glass*). Justice is the very devil.

MACAIRE. My dear sir, my dear friend and I, I regret to say, have an appointment in Lyons, or I could spend my life in this society. Charge your glasses: one hour to madness and to joy! What is to-morrow? the enemy of to-day? Wine? the bath of life. One moment: I find I have forgotten my watch. (*He makes for the door.*)

BRIGADIER. Halt!

MACAIRE. Sir, what is this jest?

BRIGADIER. Sentry at the door. Your passports.

MACAIRE. My good man, with all the pleasure in life. (*Gives papers. The* BRIGADIER *puts on spectacles, and examines them.*)

BERTRAND (*rising, and passing round to* MACAIRE's *other side*). It's life and death: they must soon find it.

MACAIRE (*aside*). Don't I know? My heart's like fire in my body.

BRIGADIER. Your name is?

MACAIRE. It is; one's name is not unknown.

BRIGADIER. Justice exacts your name.

MACAIRE. Henri-Frédéric de Latour de Main de la Tonnerre de Brest.

BRIGADIER. Your profession?

MACAIRE. Gentleman.

BRIGADIER. No, but what is your trade?

MACAIRE. I am an analytical chymist.

BRIGADIER. Justice is inscrutable. Your papers are in order. (*To* BERTRAND.) Now, sir, and yours?

BERTRAND. I feel kind of ill.

MACAIRE. Bertrand, this gentleman addresses you. He is not one of us: in other scenes, in the gay and giddy world of fashion, one is his superior. But to-day he represents the majesty of law; and as a citizen it is one's pride to do him honour.

BRIGADIER. Those are my sentiments.

BERTRAND. I beg your pardon, I——(*Gives papers*).

BRIGADIER. Your name?

BERTRAND. Napoleon.

BRIGADIER. What? In your passport it is written Bertrand.

BERTRAND. It's this way: I was born Bertrand, and then I took the name of Napoleon, and I mostly always call myself either Napoleon or Bertrand.

BRIGADIER. The truth is always best. Your profession?

BERTRAND. I am an orphan.

BRIGADIER. What the devil! (*To* MACAIRE.) Is your friend an idiot?

MACAIRE. Pardon me, he is a poet.

BRIGADIER. Poetry is a great hindrance to the ends of justice. Well, take your papers.

MACAIRE. Then we may go?

SCENE IV

To these, CHARLES, *who is seen on the gallery, going to the door of Number Thirteen. Afterwards all the characters but the* NOTARY *and the* MARQUIS.

BRIGADIER. One glass more. (BERTRAND *touches* MACAIRE, *and points to* CHARLES, *who enters Number Thirteen.*)

MACAIRE. No more, no more, no more.

BRIGADIER (*rising and taking* MACAIRE *by the arm*). I stipulate!

MACAIRE. Engagement in Turin!

BRIGADIER. Turin?

MACAIRE. Lyons, Lyons!

BERTRAND. For God's sake. . . .

BRIGADIER. Well, good-bye!

MACAIRE. Good-bye, good——

CHARLES (*from within*). Murder! Help! (*Appearing.*) Help here! The Marquis is murdered.

BRIGADIER. Stand to the door. A man up there. (*A* GENDARME *hurries up staircase into Number Thirteen,* CHARLES *following him. Enter on both sides of gallery the remaining characters of the piece, except the* NOTARY *and the* MARQUIS.)

MACAIRE. Bitten, by God!
BERTRAND. Lost! } *Aside.*

BRIGADIER (*to* DUMONT). John Paul Dumont, I arrest you.

DUMONT. Do your duty, officer. I can answer for myself and my own people.

BRIGADIER. Yes, but these strangers?

DUMONT. They are strangers to me.

MACAIRE. I am an honest man: I stand upon my rights: search me: or search this person, of whom I know too little. (*Smiting his brow.*) By heaven, I see it all. This morning——(*To* BERTRAND.) How, sir, did you dare to flaunt your booty in my very face? (*To* BRIGADIER.) He showed

me notes; he was up ere day; search him, and you'll find. There stands the murderer.

BERTRAND. O, Macaire! (*He is seized and searched, and the notes are found.*)

BRIGADIER. There is blood upon the notes. Handcuffs. (MACAIRE *edging towards the door.*)

BERTRAND. Macaire, you may as well take the bundle. MACAIRE *is stopped by sentry, and comes front, R.*)

CHARLES (*reappearing*). Stop, I know the truth. (*He comes down.*) Brigadier, my father is not dead; he is not even dangerously hurt. He has spoken. There is the would-be assassin.

MACAIRE. Hell! (*He darts across to the staircase, and turns on the second step, flashing out the knife.*) Back, hounds! (*He springs up the stair, and confronts them from the top.*) Fools, I am Robert Macaire! (*As* MACAIRE *turns to flee, he is met by the gendarme coming out of Number Thirteen; he stands an instant checked, is shot from the stage, and falls headlong backward down the stair.* BERTRAND, *with a cry, breaks from the gendarmes, kneels at his side, and raises his head.*)

BERTRAND. Macaire, Macaire, forgive me. I didn't blab; you know I didn't blab.

MACAIRE. Sold again, old boy. Sold for the last time; at least, the last time this side death. Death, what is death? (*He dies.*)

CURTAIN.

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